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THURSDAY, JULY 26TH, 2012

CELEBRATING WELSH HERITAGE AND CULTURE

EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

See inside for GEM 16-page Souvenir Special

The Bear Hotel

How Cowbridge family's TLC coaxed a Vale icon into the 21st century.
(See pages 18-19)

Ystradowen basks in the glow of its 'Best Kept Village' accolade!

THE team responsible for Ystradowen looking its best, were celebrating last week – when the village triumphed in the Vale's 'Best Kept Village' competition.

In recent years, the village has been a leading contender each time the judging has taken place and for the team, Betty Lever, Susan Squire, Mavis Burnham, Peter Lever, Will Turner and Rosemary Ives, it is a 12-month commitment – not just a question of a few weeks' work as the judging period approaches.

They took the top prize of £500 and, as in previous years, this will be spent on the village.

Mavis Burnham said: "We won two years ago, and used the money to put a small wall around the garden at the bus shelter, and a bench there, too."

The garden behind the bus shelter is a real point of pride, stretching for around 40 yards and packed with plants.

Will Turner said: "We expected to win last year but didn't, and this year we thought that Michaelston-le-Pit would take the title.

"In fact, the judge said that it was hard to compare two villages of different sizes."

A key factor in the judge's decision waa the overall smartness of Ystradowen. The condition of the children's playground, the church grounds, the village lawns and the bus shelter, which is looked after by Betty Lever, were all praised.

Susan Squire, who insisted that her friends in the team do the bulk of the work, said: "The judge said he couldn't find a scrap of litter."

Will Turner praised Peter Lever for his hard work and said: "I kept taking my lawn-mower out and finding that Peter had got there before me!"

Ystradowen villagers proudly celebrate: ***'We are the champions!'***

THE WINNING TEAM FROM YSTRADOWEN. Back row (left to right): Peter Lever and Will Turner. Front row: Betty Lever, Susan Squire and Mavis Burnham. (Unfortunately, Rosemary Ives could not be present as she was on holiday).

Of Maes and men..

all you need to know about the Eisteddfod

THIS week, The GEM, official partner of the National Eisteddfod, proudly presents a special 16-page souvenir – with all the information you will need to make the most of this great celebration of Welsh culture!

Our comprehensive pull-out can help visitors decide when to go, what to see, and how much can be squeezed into a day!

Elsewhere, on pages 20–23) we look at how the community and local businesses have joined forces to welcome this great national event to the Vale.

the White Lion
YSTRADOWEN

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Call for helicopter in beach rescue

THE emergency services had to call in the Air Ambulance last Sunday (July 22) after a woman slipped on wet rocks at Southerndown.

The accident happened at Temple Bay, where the woman had fallen about three metres.

Robin Jackson, the station officer at Llantwit Major Coastguard, said:

"Due to the casualty's condition, the Welsh Air Ambulance Service requested the assistance of the Llantwit Major Coastguard Search and Rescue team."

Because of the difficult terrain, the helicopter could not land on the beach, so the casualty was airlifted, with the help of the rescue team, to safer ground, before being transferred to an ambulance and taken to hospital.

Mr Jackson said: 'This incident shows again the care needed to be taken due to conditions under foot. It also highlights the importance of wearing the correct clothing.

"It is also vital that people are aware of the tides in the area where they are walking, to ensure that they do not put themselves at risk."

Council's £82 million

A boost for council housing. *(See page 3).*

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Will cycleway be yet another white elephant?

I WOULD like to congratulate Mr Mapledoram on his letter regarding the so-called cycleway being built on the outskirts of Buttrills Field, Barry.

I would like to add that as the council is endeavouring to save money, why was the path situated alongside the edge of the field past the cemetery, when the shorter route at the rear of Colcot Road would have cost half the amount of money?

There is already a road out of the field by the Community Centre, which would have again cut the cost.

I certainly did not see any survey being carried out at the time.

As I am disabled, and live near the field, I can assure folk that most of the people come down the side of Colcot Road, or across the field.

I cannot see the sense in thinking that folk will use a route which will take twice as long to cross the field.

Will this path be another white elephant, like the crossing put in at great expense on Colcot Road?

It is certainly not used by many folk and the young people from the school still cross the road at a point out of the Leisure Centre - which is where the crossing should have been built.

One wonders what kind of regulation the council will put in place to minimise the use of motor cycles?

Did the Director of Visible Services think that 10 days notice was sufficient for a project of this description?

Miriam Griffiths, Barry.

Bird's eye DVD from an Airship!

IF Alex Campbell (The GEM, page 23, last week) wishes to contact me directly, I can send him a DVD I made last year, when I flew in the Goodyear Airship from Cardiff Airport.

We flew over Dyffryn Gardens, Culverhouse Cross, Ely, Fairwater, Canton and Cardiff city centre, returning over the Bay, Penarth, Sully, Cosmeston Park lakes, Barry and then the BAMC hanger, before landing on the grass adjacent to the flying club.

Flying at only 53mph, the views over the Vale were quite spectacular.

Contact me on either 01446 774502, or: wilcock60@aol.com.

Mike Wilcock Cowbridge

Keeping track of the Goodyear Airship

IN the July 12 issue of the Bridgend & Porthcawl GEM there were photos of an airship, with the question: '*Did anyone else notice it flying over Barry*?'

Well, on Sunday July 8, I was at the Pencoed community carnival and coming over the trees and going west was the Goodyear Airship.

It was nice to see it again, as the last time I saw it was in Cardiff at football matches in the Millennium Stadium.

I have a website for reders – *www.flickriver.com.*

Tap in '*goodyear march 2011*' and click on search; then on the right, click on 'blue airship flight over cardiff 2011 (set)' for 11 photos.

I am a transport enthusiast volunteer and carry out information research on transport.

I am also the eyes and ears of the Transport Network.

Mr JJ Dyer, Pencoed

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THE COLUMN YOU WRITE

Readers' Letters

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We will (in certain circumstances) protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters BRIEF and address them to: The Editor, Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7E OR email gemeditorial@tindlenews. co.uk

'WALK THE WALK, NOT TALK THE TALK'

IT is time to stop speaking words and producing documents – build roads and cars will fill them – build cyclepaths (with advice from real, cyclists, not highway engineers) and cyclists will get out of their cars and take to the open path.

The cycle routes between Cardiff and Barry, via Wenvoe, Ely and Dinas Powys) are clear to be seen, and are available for construction.

For a few of the millions spent on committees and reports which go onto shelves, cycle paths could be constructed, to reduce the nose to tail traffic which the latest

Housing developments at White Farm, Port Road and the Waterfront in Barry, are about to exacerbate.

As to the coastal path - this is an absolute joke in this part of Wales.

For many years now, Barry and Vale Friends of the Earth have fought with a reluctant, anti-cycling Vale Council, to get cycle paths built.

When the now powerless Coun Jeff James suggested an expensive, steel, raised route, we advised a low-cost, low-level cycleway/footpath, from Cardiff Bay to Penarth, around Penarth Head. Millions of pounds of our money was wasted on an impossible, failed scheme.

Members of Barry and Vale FoE and their colleagues, have cycled the Vale and Cardiff for many years and know what is needed and where – we even have the plans and routes drawn up!

After all, we are asked to take more exercise and our schemes would benefit those who wish to walk on well-maintained paths.

Walking, along with cycling, will help to reduce obesity and the pressures on our Health Service.

We hope the new generation of Vale/Cardiff councillors, along with our Government, might finally stop pontificating and start acting.

We await their call, to start a well-funded cycling forum, to build a Sustainable future,

Keith Stockdale, *Barry and Vale FoE Co-ordinator.*

'Don't feed the seagulls!'

I READ with interest, your article on July 5, about the seagulls swooping onto a pond and taking the fish.

For the life of me, I'll never understand why people feed these creatures.

I love birds, but why don't they stick to putting out food in bird feeders and let the gulls return to the sea, where they belong?

Gulls feed on refuse tips and carry all kinds of diseases. Every breeding season, you hear of people being attacked; indeed, a friend of mine needed treatment in A & E for a nasty gash on his head, that he received from a seagull. A neighbour was feeding them, which had encouraged them to nest on his roof!

People walking by were also attacked.

I have a similar problem with a resident near me feeding them most mornings!

Our cars and driveway are always covered in droppings, and it's probably just a matter of time before someone is attacked.

Please just feed the small birds – such as sparrows and finches, which sadly are in decline – and let the 'sea rats' go back to the sea.

(Name and address supplied)

'WELL DONE TO VALE COUNCIL'

I WOULD like to take the opportunity to thank the Vale of Glamorgan Coucil (Contact OneVale) for the prompt and efficient manner in which they have responded to a complaint I felt obliged to bring to their attention on June 18.

The subway path under Severn Avenue, Cwm Talwg and the surrounding footpaths were very much overgrown with brambles and garden trees, which presented a somewhat hazardous environment for pedestrians.

As well as the overgrown trees, litter, blocked drains and animal waste all contributed to spoil what was a pleasant short cut, into what can only be described as a semi assault course.

Contact OneVale acknowledged my concerns within three days, and assigned me individual reference numbers for each of the issues I raised. Each of these concerns has now been dealt with and I can confirm that today's journey (July 13) to pick my son up from school, was a most pleasant experience.

This positive customer-service experience seems to me, to be a rare occurence, and I would like to let others know about the prompt and efficient manner Contact OneVale have handled my concerns.

I would encourage all Vale residents to let our council know if they have any issues, – they can't fix it if they don't know about it.

From this experience, I would suggest the Vale Council are well postioned to respond to residents' concerns; and we should all take an active part in ensuring that our paths, parks and other public areas are pleasant, clean, and enjoyable.

So, in summary, well done, Vale Council – and to all readers – please use this service (Contact OneVale) as it clearly has done a good job for me.

Mr Huw Davies, Barry.

Council outreach is welcomed

THE Vale Council cabinet's pledge to make its decision-making process "more transparent and inclusive" by holding regular meetings outside Barry, where the public can ask questions, is a welcome initiative.

This is precisely the kind of move for which FocusBARRY has been pressing and which helped three independent candidates to become borough councillors at the May 2012 local elections.

Three other issues which have seen U-turns completed recently, are the re-examination of the Local Development Plan, plans for Cemetery Approach to become a community facility, and eight-hour opening restored for Barry Hospital.

Each of these have been central to public campaigns by FocusBARRY.

Let us hope that the Vale cabinet going 'out and about' is not just a box-ticking exercise. If they really mean to be more transparent and inclusive, then they should extend the policy to the planning process.

When there was a public outcry backing a 11,300-signature petition opposing housing development at Cemetery Approach, a Save Cemetery Approach Action Group spokesman was denied permission to address the planning committee, even though more than 100 concerned local people packed into the committee room.

Now, cabinet members, if you really mean to make a new start by being more open and transparent, why not allow one person to speak for, say two or three minutes, when contentious issues come before the planning committee?

Fourteen other councils in Wales allow this small concession to democracy. Why not the Vale?

Then we'd really know you were serious and not just embarked on a window-dressing expedition.

Derek Hooper, (FocusBARRY supporter)

'Don't write off the elderly'

PLEASE do not condemn us because we are old! I have met elderly people who having reached 80 plus, do not want to be around anymore!

It is the luck of the draw as to what age we depart this life.

According to authorities you are old when you start getting the old age pension - mid 60s!

It is appalling that, for whatever reason, there is never enough money to support older people!

There are so many calls on the finances of this country - NHS, police, education, armed forces _ each one having a legitimate claim.

If the voracious greedy institution in Brussels demanded less, this country could probably be able, eventually, to regain a certain balance!

How are we to cope with an outgoing payment of £50 million per day as basic, and added to whatever Brussels squeezes out of Britain on one excuse or another, which we dare not refuse to pay – or be threatened with dire consequences?

Maybe when we reach 80 years old, we should either be turned into dust, or dispatched wholesale into space!

Mrs D E Coombes Herridge, Barry.

Shale gas tests: planning disgrace

WELL, well, the planning inspectorate has come up trumps again! It has once again gone against the Vale Council, and the wishes of the people and allowed an appeal for a Bridgend firm,Coastal Oil and Gas, to test for Shale gas in Llandow.

Not only that, but the Inspectorate has decreed that the council must pay the costs of the company.What an outrageous decision, once again, by an unelected quango.

We have a council which has been democratically elected by the people, for the people.

The council, whether rightly or wrongly, denied this company the right to drill. It has gone through an appeal process to the council which was again denied, and then it is allowed to go through a third appeal to an unelected body – which has over the past few months, steam-rollered planning applications through that the council has rejected.

No compassion has been shown to the people who are against these planning applications.

Why on earth do we have a council with the power to accept or reject planning applications, which can then go to a Planning Inspectorate that has the power to overturn these decisions; its absolutely crazy.

Why doesn't this gas company drill for shale gas on its own doorstep?

This country is slowly becoming a dictatorship,democracy is being thrown through the window.

The Assembly Government must abolish this quango with immediate effect,and let local democracy decide what is right or wrong.

D J Radford, Barry.

Let us know your views: *gemeditorial@ tindlenews.co.uk*

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL AUGUST 2)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 – 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
26 Thur			12.06	8.7
27 Fri	00.27	8.6	13.03	8.4
28 Sat	01.33	8.3	14.21	8.2
29 Sun	02.59	8.1	15.44	8.2
30 Mon	04.21	8.4	17.00	8.6
31 Tues	05.29	8.7	17.58	9.2
01 Wed	06.26	9.3	18.51	9.7
02 Thur	07.11	9.8	19.36	10.0

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should always check with a tide table specific to their location.

E-Mail Contacts: *gemeditorial@tindlenews.co.uk* • *gemsales@tindlenews.co.uk* • Tel 01446 774484
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As Ystradowen wins the 'Best Kept Village' title, residents consider LDP

by TIM CHAPMAN

MORE than 70 people attended a public meeting in Ystradowen on July 13 over the possible impact of the Local Development Plan on the village.

Although the original LDP, which proposed 95 houses locally, is to be reassessed by the new Vale Council coalition, local campaigners have insisted there should be no complacency.

They point out that a huge increase in the village could lead to an increase in traffic on local roads and more pressure on local amenities.

Dr Andrew Loyns made a presentation on the potential impact of the LDP, highlighting a number of key issues.

Residents raised a number of concerns in the discussion following the presentation.

After the meeting, Dr Loyns told The GEM: "Ystradowen has minimal services and facilities, but nevertheless the previous Conservative Vale Council announced that 95 houses would be built in the village, which would lead to a 50 per cent increase in population, the second largest proportional increase arising from the LDP of any Vale community.

"A village of Ystradowen's size, infrastructure and facilities cannot be expected to absorb such an increase on a sustainable basis: it faces saturation under the Conservative LDP housing proposals.

"The new Labour Vale Council, elected in May, has pledged to undertake a 'fundamental review' of the LDP and to provide a proper consultative process. Although no timetable has been announced, we welcome this commitment by Coun Neil Moore, the council leader.

"The meeting very strongly supported the launch of a campaign against the current proposals.

"A campaign email network is being established right across the village with over 80 households already joined up."

Dr Loyns added: "Anyone wishing to contact the 'Fair Deal for Ystradowen' campaign can reach us on our new email address: ystradowenldp@gmail.com."

BEST KEPT VILLAGE

Prior to Dr Loyn's presentation, villagers heard the great news that Ystradowen had won the 2012 'Best Kept Village in the Vale competition', with a magnificent winner's silver cup being put on display.

Rose Ives, from the winning team, told the meeting: "We take great pride in our village; this is what this meeting is all about!"

The message of Fairtrade spread by school shop

The Fairtrade shop is returning in the summer term after its success during the spring.

YSGOL Iolo Morganwg received Fairtrade status last year, following an exciting year of activities, which originated from their Eco-schools projects.

Once again this year, the children and parents have been learning about the importance of Fairtrade through their latest project – a Fairtrade shop.

Following the success of a similar venture during the spring term, the Eco-committee analysed their research and results and decided to continue with this regularly throughout the year.

More stock was ordered and, as a result, a Fairtrade shop was held for parents during sports day last Wednesday (July 20). The stall sold Fairtrade products bought by the Eco-committee and also Fairtrade tea/coffee and cakes. Even the raffle prize was a Fairtrade chocolate cake in the shape of a trophy!

As Sarah Tudur, the Eco-schools co-ordinator explained: "The shop has been very successful with the children and parents and it has been an excellent opportunity for the Eco-committee to develop many skills, especially with regard to prices and profit and loss."

The Eco-committee continue to work diligently towards maintaining their Eco-school's recognition and by extending the school's understanding of ESDGC, they hope to gain their third green flag next summer.

Vale Council's £82 million to revamp local housing stock

by PHILIP IRWIN

THE Vale Council will be spending almost £20 million per year, over the next four years, on bringing council housing up to standard.

The Vale Council is embarking on "one of its most ambitious refurbishment projects", aiming to bring all council homes in the Vale up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) to comply with Welsh Government requirements.

Kitchens, bathrooms, rewiring, heating systems, windows, doors and roofs will be renewed over a four-and-a-half year period, starting on September 3.

Four external contractors have been appointed to work in partnership with the council and these include:

• Covering the western Vale and rural areas will be Lovell Partnerships Ltd.

• Working on Barry Area 1 (Dyfan and Gibbonsdown) will be Ian Williams Ltd.

• Barry Area 2 (the rest of Barry) is the responsibility of Apollo Property Services Ltd.

• Finally, work in Penarth and Dinas Powys will be done by SMK Building & Maintenance Ltd.

A Vale Council spokeswoman said: "The contractors were appointed after an extensive procurement exercise, and all have considerable experience in delivering these types of works.

"The council's own building services department will also be undertaking some of the refurbishment works, mainly in sheltered housing accommodation across the Vale."

The total cost of the programme is in the region of £82 million over the contract period.

Coun Neil Moore, the leader of the council, said: "Council tenants have been waiting for a number of years for the commencement of this programme.

"We have appointed experienced contractors to deliver this programme and I am confident that tenants will be pleased with the work that is carried out.

"Not only will all council properties be upgraded, but there will be wider benefits delivered by increasing local jobs and apprenticeships in the area, and spending the local pound within the Vale.

"This is good news for the local economy."

He continued: "The council is mindful that there will be disruption to tenants during these works.

"However, tenant liaison officers have been appointed for each contract area and their role is to look after the welfare of tenants and their families during the works."

He added that all contractors will be monitored on a continual basis and their performance reported to the council, and to a tenants quality and design forum.

Police issue new appeal after 'silver' burglary

POLICE in Cowbridge are reappealing for information, following a burglary at the Antiques Centre on Eastgate.

The burglary occurred overnight on Wednesday, June 20 .Access was gained to the shop via a side window and a large quantity of silver antiques were stolen.

Detective Sergeant Rob Davidson of Barry CID said: "An investigation is ongoing and officers are following all lines of enquiry.

"I want to ask people in the trade who may have been offered the chance to purchase any of these antiques to contact the police.

"I also want to hear from anyone who may have seen anything suspicious in the Eastgate area of Cowbridge throughout the night in question."

Anyone with any information regarding this burglary is asked to contact Detective Sergeant Rob Davidson at Barry CID on 01446 731606, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

One-off night at the Bush!

It's back – a special one-off Sunday night summer quiz at the Bush, Sunday, July 29 at 7.30pm.

An extravaganza of intellect, trivia and mind boggling brain teasers, rounds will include: Tour de Bwlch, Oz or bust, Sax on fire, Five rings, Weatherman walking and Universally challenged (be warned – Google or Wikipedia will be of no use whatsoever)!

There will also be a very special end-game – a mash-up of Scattergories and Pointless!

There will also be an amazing raffle – prizes to date include: hospitality tickets for Cardiff City's pre-season friendly against Newcastle United, beauty/gift/shopping vouchers, Radley leather bag, golf lesson, champagne and wine tasting.

The quiz will be in memory of Liz's uncle Ben, who passed into a peaceful sleep recently, and all funds raised will be donated to Velindre Cancer Centre in Cardiff.

It's £1 entry per person and winning team takes half (the other half goes to Velindre).

Organiser's slip mars Dyffryn tour

On Wednesday, July 18, the LAMBS local history group had a guided tour of the extensive renovation work in the Grade II listed Dyffryn House.

After the tour, members enjoyed a walk around the beautiful gardens surrounding the house.

The restoration project in the house, which was built in the late 19th century by the coal tycoon John Cory, is supported in part by a £600,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Members were conducted around the house by the restoration project manager, Geraldine Donovan. It was immensely informative and entertaining, and members were impressed with the scale of the project, which is restoring or bringing to light many original architectural and decorative features that had previously lain neglected or concealed.

The visit was unfortunately marred by an injury to LAMBS trip organiser, Jenny Morgan, who slipped and broke her ankle!

In consequence, at the meal afterwards in the Traherne Arms, the traditional vote of thanks was replaced by a toast to Jenny's early return to the full fitness she needs for her active lifestyle, involving horses and dogs.

MB

BRIDGE RESULTS

VALE of Glamorgan bridge club, club night, Monday July 16 (20 pairs):

First – Mike Best and David Birt, 71.06 per cent; Second – Barbara and Colin Easterbrook, 63.19 per cent; Third – Marjorie Morris and Linda Pinnock, 60.65 per cent; Fourth – Simon and Jonathan Richards, 59.49 per cent; Fifth – Steve Burgoyne and John Evans, 54.17 per cent; Sixth – Miriam Handren and Simon Gottschalk, 51.85 per cent.

Cowbridge and District Bridge Club (Llanbleddian) club night, Tuesday July 17 (14 pairs): First – Ann Hughes and Teri Pollard, 61.67 per cent; Second – Luba Ashworth and Joan Bird, 60.83 per cent; Third – Barbara and Colin Easterbrook, 58.75 per cent; Fourth – Pat and Brian Swain, 55.09 per cent; Fifth – Mearl Owen and Debbie Rosevear, 52.92 per cent; Sixth – Judy Springett and Marian Arnold, 51.25 per cent.

BS

COMMUNITY NEWS

TREOES, LLANGAN & ST MARY HILL

Your local correspondent is Nancy Davidge, "Tynewydd", Llangan. (01656) 860303

Au Revoir!

THE final day of the summer term at Llangan School was indeed one to remember!

The children were able to play out in the sunshine – which had become a rarity with the inclement weather we had endured for weeks.

I was making my weekly visit to the school to bid farewell to retiring headteacher, Mary Noyes. I was shown a book which contained drawings by the children of various ages, showing their perception of the head!

They were all much appreciated by Mrs Noyes, who intends keeping the book as a reminder of her happy nine years at Llangan.

A talented parent painted a picture of the school and presented it to Mary. It was finally time to bid Mary 'Au Revoir', with a promise to keep in touch.

I have enjoyed my weekly visits to the school and I hope this will continue under the leadership of our new head, Mr Steve Williams.

Young at Heart Club

AT the last meeting of the summer, the Young at Heart Club joined a trip to the Blue Anchor at East Aberthaw for lunch, stopping on the way to spend an hour in Llantwit Major for coffee.

Members were fortunate in experiencing a beautiful summer day. Once again, a big thank you to club stalwarts Anne Ellis, Marje Adams and Barbara Crigg, for their care of the less able club members. It really is appreciated.

The club will reopen on September 8 – new members always welcome.

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'OUR SMALL COMMUNITY THOROUGHLY INSPIRES US'

Local sisters take monsoon Moonride for the CF charity

REPORT by TIM CHAPMAN

AN intrepid pair of sisters battled monsoon-like conditions when they took part in a night-time cycle race in the south east of England to raise funds for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Lucy Thomas and Ginnie Bateman, of Llantwit Major, left Alexandra Palace in London late on the evening of June 29, heading for the race course in Brighton.

Lucy, whose 18-month-old daughter Nancy has cystic fibrosis, told The GEM: "The long distance charity bike ride is called the Moonride and the route is 100km.

"As the name suggests, it was cycled at night, and we set off at 11.30pm from central London.

"It was something we had never tried before – cycling through packed London streets and through the night in torrential rain with 20mph headwinds.

"We went up some incredible climbs and equally terrifying descents, all in the pitch dark with only our bike lights for comfort!

"Despite only starting the training for the event six weeks before, we managed to complete it in a respectable five hours and 40 minutes.

"We were 260th out of the 750 people that took part."

Lucy and Ginnie had put in some vital pre-race training with a demanding taskmaster!

"We were helped by very hard 'spin classes' at Studio 9 in Bridgend with our punishing instructor Rhiannon Owens, so a big thanks to her for getting us 'bike fit' after being off a bike for nearly 10 years!

"My husband Lyn and daughter Nancy drove down to Brighton to meet us on the Saturday and bring our exhausted bodies back home.

"I'd like to thank my neighbour Brian for writing out a step by step guide to help us get across London with our bikes from Paddington Station to Alexandra Palace."

Lucy, Lyn, their family and friends have arranged and taken part in numerous events to raise the profile of the CF Trust.

BUCKET COLLECTION

The latest fundraiser involving the Thomas family and their friends took place at Cardiff Airport.

Lucy and Ginnie on the Moonride.

ABOVE: Nancy with mum Lucy.

Lucy explained: "The airport kindly allowed us to do bucket collections on Saturday mornings.

"Together with donations from friends and family we have raised more than £1,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

"Our small community continues to inspire and support us in all our endeavours and we are really humbled by them and would like to thank them all again from the bottom of our hearts.

"Nancy is very lucky to grow up surrounded by all these loving people."

Lucy is keen to do the ride again next year and if other local people would like to take part too, they can contact her and Lyn at: nowmrsthomas@btinternet.com.

To find out more about the CF Trust's fundraising, please call 0300 373 1100 or email: events@cftrust.org.uk.

For more information on the charity, please go to: www.cftrust.org.uk/.

A day in the life of the Cowbridge Mayor!

by Coun NICOLA THOMAS

I SAT down to write and got the feeling that perhaps my column was getting a little dreary, so this week I thought I would try and get over, to all, the more humorous and actually the more real side of this surreal lifestyle.

I have been thrown into in my first experience of 'a year in office' as Mayor of Cowbridge with Llanblethian.

The past 14 days or so has been a mish-mash of civic services, church services, concerts, coffee mornings, school awards ceremonies, barbecues and, sadly, even a funeral, and lastly a visit to Ty Hafan children's hospice, my chosen charity for the year.

All the time, one is ever conscious of the fact that one's duty through every moment is to promote, enhance and indeed to be a good ambassador for the town of Cowbridge.

In my quest to achieve this, I have been graced with many kind comments about my outfits or my hat or the chain of office, which allow me to believe that, perhaps, I am at least seen to be putting my best foot forward for Cowbridge, but I could not help wondering how all these kind people would react if they could see the reality, behind the scenes, and the build-up to this end product.

So for your amusement – a little verse, depicting a typical day in the life of this Mayor...0.

I awake with a start,
and stretch with a yawn,
The alarm clock is calling,
at the crack of dawn,
My mind, as it wakens,
remembers the call
From my consort, our diary
to check, duties all.
A service at ten, for the new
reverend Perry
Must get out the hat and the
chain and be merry.
But first, I have cows that
need feeding and checking
Ducks, geese and chickens
want releasing for pecking.
So no time for breakfast,
it's on with the wellies
And off in the rain, with
the dog but no brolly
There's silage to handle
for feeding the cattle
The yards need a scraping
so the muck doesn't settle
The poultry are fed and have
left in a flurry to dig for the
worms in the muck
and the slurry
The ferals, about seven, need
their milk every day
To kill all the mice and keep
vermin at bay.
Bed down the cowshed and
count all the legs, divide
them by four, was what
my father said.
Check the machinery, fill up
with fuel, go round the fences,
is the general rule.
Not much more to be done
at this time,
With the rain, ground's too
wet, must just wait till it's fine.
So back to the house and
a quick cup of tea, then
a shower and brush up
and on with the gear.
The phone rings. It's Andrea,
my consort, once more,
She is sick and unwell and
can't come any more.
Poor husband I leave, once
again, in the kitchen to
get his own breakfast
amidst all the dishes.
As I glance him a kiss and fly
out the door, I suddenly feel I
am skimming the floor.
Hold on to the hat! and bag
all a flying!
As I slip on the present the
chickens left lying.
The dog thinks it's fun and
to the farm we are going,
so rushes to beat me and
once more sends me flying.
So hat on one side and bag
round my neck I get to the car,
which is covered in muck
How to get in with a jacket
that's cream and not get
to the church with it
brown, black or green?
Mission accomplished,
I arrive at the church,
try to compose myself,
so no person knows
So the shoulders go back
and its up with the nose.
I walk through the door
and it's suddenly silent,
No verger, no congregation,
just empty and quiet,
I walk up the aisle, in my out-
fit and hat, to see Canon and
Reverend both busy in prayer,
Looking up to think what is
that woman doing there?
The time it is wrong, I have
hurried for nothing,
The service is not until seven
thirty, or something.
Do you think they could tell
all the things I'd been through,
to get to the church by
the hour I thought due?
Well, if they did, they were
kindly and bright
and let me go homeward with
a heart that was light,
Just to rush to repeat it
all over that night.
But despite all the hassle, the
rush and the blips, I really am
proud to be head of the ship!
The functions are worthy,
the people are warm
And the talent one meets in
our youth is so great
Yes – It truly is worth all
the trouble I take!

Just to conclude, on a more serious note, may I say that this week I have been privileged to meet and listen to, or view the work of, some of the most amazing talent of the youth of our town.

I can assure you all, that for every one piece of bad news you may hear or read about the youth of today, there are ten fold, wonderful youth out there, who are good, talented, and extremely accomplished.

They who are growing up in a way which will ensure that the town of Cowbridge retains its remarkable reputation and remains in the history books for many generations to come.

So for this week, I would like to pay tribute to the pupils and youth of Cowbridge, and to the parents who bring them up and support them; and the teachers, in our Cowbridge schools, who educate them to such high standards, while extracting and enhancing their natural talents to enable them to become such accomplished young adults.

...and two other sisters do it for the Marie Curie charity!

SISTERS Lynne Gwatkin and Kim Sellick held a Marie Curie Blooming Great Tea Party in Barry recently.

The bad weather held off as 50 guests, including family, friends and neighbours, enjoyed tea, coffee (wine!) and delicious homemade cakes while raising money for Marie Curie cancer care.

Lynne said: "Our mother was diagnosed with lung cancer last March and sadly died in October. During mum's final weeks she was cared for by the wonderful nurses and doctors at Holme Towers hospice in Penarth.

"The care mum received was outstanding. Kim and I wanted to do something to give something back to say thank you.

Debbie Pearce (centre) enjoying the tea

"We would like to thank everyone who attended the tea party and who donated raffle prizes (which raised over £200).

"A special thanks to Ioan Wardhough who entertained everyone during the afternoon with his beautiful harp playing.

"Thanks also to Streets Brasserie, Aspirations Florists, The Bridge Cafe and The Velvet Touch Beauty Salon for their generous contributions.

"At the end of the day the total amount raised was a staggering £700! Fantastic!"

The money will now pay for the overnight nursing care of three cancer patients. Donations can still be made to the fundraising team at Marie Curie Hospice, Bridgeman Road, Holme Towers, Penarth, CF64 3YR, or by telephoning 02920 426068.

Kick up your heels with the Thingumijigs

AFTER enjoying the unique experience of playing traditional Welsh tunes at this year's Eisteddfod, local band, the *'Thingumijigs'*, will be hosting their own *twmpath* on Friday, August 10 at the Llantonian Hall, Llantwit Major.

A sparkling selection of jigs, reels, polkas and waltzes will be called in English by popular caller Mic Spenceley.

Everyone; experienced dancers, novices, and families with children, will be encouraged to kick up their heels and celebrate Welsh music and dance, as the Eisteddfod week draws to a close.

Home-made refreshments and soft drinks will be on sale.

"Let's get together to make this an evening to remember, from 7pm-10.30pm," said a spokesperson.

Contact: thingumijigs@gmail.com, or call 01446 796670.

PRAISE FOR THE UNDERDOGS...

THE St Athan Primary School PTA would like to express its gratitude to a young band called The Underdogs, who are students at Bridgend College, and OneSound Event Services, who provided a disco, at very short notice, for the year-6 leavers' party.

They pulled out all the stops and made the day very special. A great time was had by all, including the teachers.

Everyone at St Athan Primary would like to wish the band all the very best in their musical career.

Julie Lynch-Wilson
St Athan
(for St Athan Primary School PTA)

Witty poems with a touch of pathos

NEWS FROM BOVERTON WI

ON an extremely wet July evening, Joan Davies opened the meeting with the usual business and notices.

However, the rain was soon forgotten when Jan Price, the speaker for the evening, was introduced. She provided a very entertaining time with much laughter when she read many poems she has written.

She was born in Llantwit Major and started writing at a very early age.

She has led a very colourful life, drawing her material from her own experiences running public houses, eavesdropping and generally people-watching!

Her observations of everyday life really get to the heart of situations.

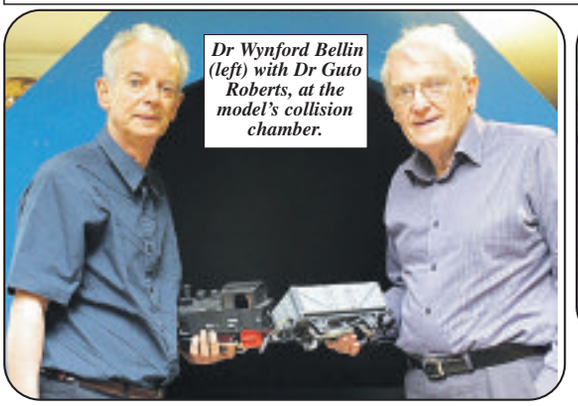
Although most of the poems we heard were really humorous with very clever punch lines, others were full of pathos.

Apart from poetry writing, Jan teaches and performs veil dancing – a lady of many talents!

Wendy Jackson won the raffle and Liz Gabb won the competition 'Bloom of the Month'.

Members do not meet in August, but visitors and new members will be made very welcome in September. **AC**

Local men help bring Geneva experiment to Eisteddfod at Llandow



Dr Wynford Bellin (left) with Dr Guto Roberts, at the model's collision chamber.

ABOVE: Morgan Denham (on right) who has been working on software for the Eisteddfod's LHC, with Dr Guto Roberts.

by PHILIP IRWIN

THE main scientific exhibit in the Eisteddfod Science Pavilion – a family-friendly version of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) – has been put together with help from local people.

The genuine LHC is 100 metres below ground near Geneva, spanning the border between Switzerland and France.

The Eisteddfod Maes at Llandow is to have its own version – one for everyone to see and discuss with experts from CERN and Swansea University's Physics department.

Dr Guto Roberts has been busy building a model of the CERN collider at a workshop near Llantrisant.

Like the CERN collider, the Llandow collider has a large ring and two smaller rings.

Subatomic particles (carried by trains at Llandow) are accelerated on the smaller rings and then build up maximum speed on the large ring moving in opposite directions.

The maximum speed on the CERN collider is near the speed of light, but on the Llandow collider it will be at a speed visitors will enjoy watching. Morgan Denham of Llandow has helped Guto with final checks on the software controlling acceleration and speed before everything is moved to Llandow to be the attraction in the centre of the Eisteddfod Science Pavilion.

Morgan studies robotics and artificial intelligence at Aberystwyth University. Timing – not just acceleration and speed – is crucial for getting the biggest collision at the desired point.

Hence, there is advanced software control in the Llandow model.

Dr Wynford Bellin, chair of the local science and technology committee, told The GEM that the exhibit would feature colourful explosions, and that children and adults would enjoy watching the particle movements.

Dr Rhodri Jones of CERN will present the main science lecture at the Vale Eisteddfod at Llandow.

He is going to explain what the latest results from the CERN collider mean.

Dr Bellin said: "I think the model in the Science Pavilion will be one of the attractions that people will want to visit and revisit over the eight days of the festival."

Iolo Park in Barry will be the scene of a ground-breaking 'smoke-free' pilot scheme in the autumn.

'CHILDREN AT RISK FROM PEOPLE LIGHTING UP'

Smoking ban pilot in park

Report by TIM CHAPMAN

A local park will be 'smoke-free' from September – as part of a six-month pilot scheme.

If successful, it could lead to a full ban on smoking in parks throughout the Vale.

Iolo Park, just off Treharne Road, Barry, has been selected for the pilot. Last September, it was re-opened following a £204,000 refurbishment, which included a multi-purpose play area.

Now, it will be the scene of a ground-breaking scheme, which could see an end locally to people lighting up in public play areas.

Phil Beaman, the operational manager parks and grounds maintenance division, confirmed that the Vale Council had been working with health professionals to get the scheme up and running by the autumn.

"I have been in discussion with colleagues of the Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team, regarding a joint initiative for a six-month smoke free pilot at Iolo Park.

"Health promotion practitioners have contacted three local primary schools to design a poster and the closing date for the competition was July 20.

"Funding for signage has been secured and the pilot is due to be launched this September."

Mr Beaman added: "As the pilot has not yet started, I am unable to comment at the moment on the introduction of an official policy for the Vale."

Although the Vale Council won't commit itself on the possibility of a complete ban on smoking in playgrounds, if the pilot leads to a healthier, cleaner environment there are likely to be calls for it to be extended.

The pilot will encourage people not to smoke in the park, sparing youngsters second hand smoke and reducing tobacco litter.

ASH Wales (Action on Smoking and Health), a voluntary organisation which campaigns to prevent health problems caused by smoking, discovered through a Freedom of Information request that only two of Wales' 22 local authorities already have official policies prohibiting smoking in children's outdoor playgrounds.

The charity launched a national campaign for smoke-free playgrounds in 2010 and says it has developed a toolkit to help local authorities implement playground bans.

ASH Wales' chief executive Elen de Lacy said: "All councils in Wales already have the power to ban and enforce a ban on smoking in their playgrounds and we want to see all councils follow the examples of Caerphilly and Powys.

"We know that children are at particular risk from second hand smoke and that they are more likely to start smoking themselves if they see adults doing it in a family friendly environment.

"It is vital that we denormalise smoking to reduce the rates of young people taking it up and also reduce their exposure to smoke in areas that they gather."

Bluebirds' supporter joins the team line-up – *of vicars!*

A KEEN supporter of Cardiff City has been signed up for a team of vicars serving in the Vale.

Rev Martyn Perry begins his ministry in the Vale this week after he was licensed as Team Vicar of Cowbridge by the Assistant Bishop of Llandaff, David Wilbourne. He will focus on the north of the parish.

Originally from Sebastopol in Torfaen, Martyn served in Cilybebyll for 14 years before moving to the Vale with his wife Fay.

Rev Perry said he was looking forward to being part of a team of clergy: "It feels like the right time for me to explore ministry as part of a larger team. Cowbridge seemed like a natural fit.

"And, of course, it will be good to be closer to Cardiff City – regardless of the colours they play in!"

The Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan, who is also Bishop of Llandaff, said: "It is excellent that someone who has previously had sole charge of a parish wants to be part of a collaborative team.

" Normally, a team vicar in a Rectorial parish moves to be an incumbent with sole charge. Martyn has set a precedent and has an excellent record of collaborative working with lay people in Cilybebyll."

Rev Martyn Perry is ready to 'develop' the parish of Cowbridge.

As well as being Team Vicar, Martyn will continue to chair the World Mission committee of Llandaff Diocese, which, among other things, helps facilitate the diocese's links with Bangladesh. He is also a patron of the Anglican Friends of Israel.

Rev Perry said: "Engaging with the wider communion can enrich our own experiences and can be really exciting. I hope to continue to build on the links with the Church in Bangladesh."

He added he was also looking forward to engaging with communities across the parish: "I really want to integrate young people and families into the life of the church."

In his spare time, Martyn enjoys writing and recording electronic music with a friend in a band called 'Schrage Musik'. Last year he brought out a charity single for 'Harry's Fund', in memory of five-year-old Harry Patterson, a member of the Sunday school at Cilybebyll parish, who died in a tragic accident.

In his address at the service to license Martyn, the Assistant Bishop of Llandaff, David Wilbourne, said: "Martyn and Fay, you have a marvellous track record of bringing light into the darkest of tragedies.

"God bless you as you bring that light to your new ministry, may you as light bearer be met by light. Your view of ministry, decidedly collaborative, harnessing everyone's God-given gifts is so very refreshing, a light to cheer our darkness."

Rev Perry concluded: "Our welcome has been very warm, the church communities here are very welcoming. It has been really good to be received in that kind of way as we begin to look towards the future and think together about how we can develop our parish." **AM**

Group's plans for year ahead

ON July 18, Transition Llantwit held their AGM at Llantonian Hall, Llantwit to review their work for the past 12 months and outline their plans for the year to come.

Projects have already been planned and the main proposals include:

• A community garden on a plot of land next to the health centre. A survey for residents of Llantwit Major is planned at the library so that residents' opinions on how the land should be used can be ascertained.

• A local market in Llantwit Major, which would give small local businesses a chance to sell their produce.

• A review of the current community garden, Miri Mieri, and the increase in regular volunteers, highlighted how this project continues to thrive. It is hoped that Miri Mieri will continue to run alongside the new community garden project.

• The campaign against 'fracking' will continue to be in the public eye over the coming year both locally and nationally. Transition Llantwit have been heavily involved in this campaign and will continue to be supportive where needed.

• Car sharing schemes and information about how to not only reduce emissions from car travel but save money through driving more economically to be made available.

• Improve the information available at our orchard, situated behind the local scout hut, including creating informative display boards and labels for trees and plants, as well as exploring sustainable methods of controlling less desirable plants.

The formal process of appointing a committee for the forthcoming year also took place.

Spokesperson Mark Gabb told The GEM: "The community garden is an unused plot of land. We've got a lease for it, but we don't want to just go on it and do things our way. That's why we are asking what people want in the survey.

"We are very enthusiastic about local businesses and getting people using them. People forget all of what we have here in Llantwit, and so we want to highlight those businesses." **LEIGH GRUFFYD SANDERS**

Welsh medium playgroup in a celebration

CYLCH Meithrin Llanilltud Fawr has celebrated the end of another successful year, and Alun Cairns MP called in to show his support.

The Welsh language playgroup, a registered charity and non-profit organisation, was established 18 months ago, with just one pupil, and has since grown to provide a friendly and welcoming environment for 15 pupils.

Mr Cairns met children, staff and committee members at the nursery playgroup and heard about the Cylch's plans to continue developing over the coming months.

Mr Cairns said: "I'm delighted that the Cylch in Llantwit Major is going from strength-to-strength. The popular Cylch already has an extra four new pupils enlisted to start at the beginning of the new term in September, with a further three pupils starting later in the autumn.

"This is great news for the continued success and strength of this Welsh medium preschool playgroup setting."

Cylch Meithrin Llanilltud Fawr works closely with Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant, the new Welsh medium primary school in Llantwit Major,.

It provides morning Cylch sessions and offers a wrap-around care sessions for the school five days a week.

Contact Kirsti Harding on 07908308294, or see the Facebook page for further information.

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TRADITIONAL SPORTS DAY AT PETERSTON GETS LUCKY WITH THE DAY'S WEATHER!

PHOTOGRAPHS by **IAN DIXON**

SPORTS DAY at Peterston-super-Ely Church in Wales Primary School, turned out to be one of those rare sunny afternoons in July.

There was a large contingent of parents watching, and they enjoyed the traditional sports day activities; old favourites such as the egg and spoon race, skipping and sprint events.

Not all the parents were content with just watching, because some tried to relive their athletics glory days by competing in the parents' race!

ABOVE: Pupils took advantage of the sun to showcase their athletic prowess.

TOPs' tax advice

TAXHELP for Older People (TOPs) will offer free advice at Old Hall, Cowbridge on Thursday, August 9. To book an appointment, or to access the helpline, telephone 0845 601 3321 or 01308 488066.

Home visits can also be arranged via this helpline for people unable to attend the surgery.

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Cantorion stands in at the cathedral

The Choir after the services.

HAVE you ever wondered what happens when the Cathedral Choir needs a holiday? Simple... Another choir deputises!

Cantorion Illtud, based in Llantwit Major and comprising mainly members of the church choir, found this out last Sunday, when they sang in Llandaff Cathedral.

The 17-strong choir had rehearsed diligently for the occasion and, as their director Keith Young said: "Everything went well and the resulting sound was very pleasing. It was an uplifting experience."

The choir sang at the 11am Eucharist and again at the 3.30pm Evensong, with a lunch at St Michael's College in between to add to the adventure.

Given that one member of the choir is an Archdeacon, Venerable Philip Morris, who not only took part, but also preached the sermon at the morning service, you will understand why Cantorion Illtud will have long memories of 2012!

ERIC SPARK

Beach clean-up turns into school art display

FOLLOWING the recent Gilestone beach clean-up by Llantwit Major Comprehensive School pupils, the clean up crew, led by Mr Thomas, leader of art, made three recycled art installations from materials recovered on the beach.

The installations are now due to go on display in the school foyer. The art department and the KS3 pupils have been actively involved in recyled art projects throughout the year.

Mr Thomas said: "It is important that our pupils understand the impact man is having on the natural environment and how art can help create a positive message and the possibility of environmental change, however small."

Bethan receives top young volunteer award at Senedd

Bethan McAuley, the Young Volunteer of the Year, with youth club members, volunteers and staff pictured at the Senedd with the Vale AM.

THE Young Volunteer of the Year Award this year went to Bethan McAuley, who volunteers at the Western Vale Youth Clubs in Wick and Colwinston and in the Vale Youth Forum.

A Llantwit Major Comprehensive School student, Bethan was nominated for this Wales Council for Voluntary Action Award, and has won this highest honour in Wales.

With many exciting events planned for the summer, including participation in the Olympics Volunteers Team, Bethan has great prospects for the future as a determined, able and committed young person serving her community.

The Vale AM, Jane Hutt, commented: "To win the Young Volunteer of the Year Award for Wales is a great achievement and I was glad to be able to welcome Bethan McAuley to the Senedd to celebrate her success alongside youth club members and leaders, who contribute so much for the young people of the Vale of Glamorgan.

"Bethan has put the positive contribution of young people in the Vale on the Wales-wide map," she added.

S4C's Heini was on hand to help Cylch Meithrin Llanilltud Fawr practice for the upcoming National Eisteddfod at Llandow.

Cylch Meithrin Llantilltud Fawr gets set for the Eisteddfod with TV star!

CYLCH Meithrin Llanilltud Fawr were lucky enough to have a visit from Heini last week, just in time for some last-minute practising for the National Eisteddfod!

The Cylch, Llantwit's Welsh Language pre-school playgroup, which offers Welsh medium care for two-four year olds, has been busy practising the words and accompanying movements for the song which they and other Cylchs in the Vale will be singing on stage at the Eisteddfod on August 5.

They will be joined on stage by Heini, whose own programme on S4C's Cyw encourages youngsters with movement and energy in order to keep fit.

For more information on Cylch Meithrin Llanilltud Fawr, call 07908308294, or see the Facebook page. SM

Moya says thank you

PLEASE may I, through your columns, say thank you to the pupils, parents and friends of the Moya Vahey School of Russian Classical Ballet, for helping to raise £1,588 for the Richards Parks 737 Marie Curie Cancer Care £million appeal.

The performance last November and a garden party in July were both well supported.

At the garden party, the sun shone, and the dancers from across the Vale performed beautifully.

A special thank you to Peter Clinton and the Old Hall, Cowbridge.

Moya Vahey Beynon, Cowbridge.

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Vale Show honours Colwinston man's lifetime achievement

RIGHT: Chairman of the society, Robert Llewellyn, presents the award to Richard Gibb at Pancross Farm.

THE Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Society took the opportunity to present a lifetime achievement award to Richard Gibb of Colwinston, during a farm walk to Pancross Farm, Llancarfan, organised by BOCM Pauls.

Richard started working in the Vale in 1979, advising farmers on arable crop production and grassland management for livestock production.

Chairman of the society, Robert Llewellyn, said: "I was delighted to present this award to Richard Gibb; he is an extremely popular member of the Vale agricultural community."

Richard has worked in research and has even managed a large dairy herd in north Somerset. For the last 20 years, he has worked for BOCM Pauls, advising livestock producers on their animal feed requirements in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Dairy producer Edward Thomas said: "Richard is extremely knowledgeable and has helped us with the arable, grassland and formulating rations for the dairy herd and young stock."

Many farmers throughout the Vale are delighted that Richard Gibb has received this annual award.

The Vale Show takes place on Wednesday, August 22, at Fonmon Castle Park. There are still a few trade stand places available and exhibitors can find schedules for all the classes on line. ***Entries for horses and livestock close on July 28.***

(For further information please telephone 01446 710099 or look at the website www.valeofglamorganshow.co.uk.

The Vale of Glamorgan Show has so much going on throughout the day it really is a 'great day out for all the family'.

NG

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The Vale of Glamorgan Council, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry CF63 4RU
Tel: 01446 709756/01446 709335

E-Mail: scornwell-shaw@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

THE OLD HALL GARDENS DISPLAY RUSSIAN DANCE

ABOVE: One of the displays of classical Russian Dance at Old Hall Gardens.

COWBRIDGE Old Hall Gardens were the setting for the Moya Vahey School of Russian Classical Dance annual garden party on a rare day of July sunshine.

The party showcased many talented young dancers from across the Vale of Glamorgan, in a varied programme that included national, ballet and character dances.

Squash and cakes were served and spectators donated generously, raising £394.54 for Marie Curie (through Richard Parks' 737 Challenge).

It was a successful, entertaining and enjoyable afternoon. **RLJ**

Barrians saddened by cinema demolition

Picture by PHILIP DAWSON

LEFT: The demolition of the old Theatre Royal building continues apace in Barry.

GEM readers were saddened to see the Theatre Royal being demolished in Barry last week.

For many Barrians, the Theatre Royal provided hours of pleasure and entertainment over more than a century.

Later this year, construction will start on a new Extra Care facility for the elderly.

Local photographer Philip Dawson captured the image of the demolition late last week, as the rubble started piling up.

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Local pupils out to help 'change the world' *via TV*

LEFT: Ceri Elspeth Lewis, Luis Miles Evans, Rachel Lewis, and Iestyn Wyn Lewis.

A once-in-a-lifetime adventure awaits a pupil from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg, as he travels to the other side of the world to volunteer in a foreign country – for a brand new S4C series.

Luis Miles Evans (17), from Rhoose, will fly to Uganda in August with three other youngsters, to be filmed for the second series of Newid Byd (Change the World).

The year-12 pupil at the Vale's Welsh medium secondary school in Barry, Luis is studying chemistry, physics, mathematics and graphics at A-level.

He enjoys all kinds of sports, but it is in the water that he's most comfortable, as he swims and surfs. Luis has represented Wales in swimming competitions on a number of occasions. In his spare time, he is a lifeguard on Barry Island beach and at Cardiff International Pool.

"I'm thrilled to have been chosen for Newid Byd because the purpose of the trip is to help the local people who live in less-developed areas," said Luis.

"I don't know that much about Uganda, so I'm sure this trip will be an eye-opener for me of the poverty and quality of life that is evident there.

"This experience could change the way that I look at people and perhaps change the way I respond to similar situations."

Over the past few months, production company Telesgop have undertaken an intensive programme to determine the four finalists.

"The four candidates were chosen because they are enthusiastic and hard-working young people," Mererid Wigley, series producer, explained.

"I'm confident that they can respond to the challenge that faces them. I also hope their actions inspire more young people to follow in their footsteps and help others in their own communities."

Luis joins Iestyn Wyn Lewis from Llannerch-y-medd, Rachel Lewis from Pontarddulais and Pwllheli's Ceri Elsbeth Lewis, on the journey to Uganda next month, where all four will volunteer for three weeks, under the guidance of Arwel Phillips.

Once there, they will assist in a number of important community projects to help improve the way of life for the locals.

From building a goat shed to establishing a library, harvesting coffee and planting trees, the experience will give them a taste of Uganda's culture.

During this unique challenge, all four will work closely with charities including Dolen Ffermio, Size of Wales, Child of Hope, Pont and Wales Fair Trade.

They'll also focus on projects that will help communities in the Mbale region, East Uganda.

Open cabinet commitment is welcomed

I VERY much welcome the statement made by Leader Coun Neil Moore, ('Council will open up cabinet to the public', The GEM, July 19), when he says that cabinet meetings will no longer 'rubber stamp' decisions that have been made in private.

It has taken our municipal leaders a long time to realise that when dealing with public business and tax payers' money the proper and best decisions are made in the open and when people can speak freely.

The cabinet should also adopt this more open attitude when dealing with contracts, tendering and the disposal of community assets, where delegated powers and the exempt part of the agenda have been over-used.

Dennis Harkus, FocusBARRY supporter

PACT meetings

ST HILARY: coffee and chat, July 26 at The Bush Inn at 11.30am.

SULLY PACT: July 26, The Jubilee Hall at 8pm.

RHOOSE PACT: August 1 at the Celtic Way Community Centre at 7pm.

CORNERSWELL PACT: August 2 at Cogan Leisure Centre at 7pm.

ST ATHAN PACT: August 5 at The Gathering Place, 2pm.

BUTTRILLS PACT: August 6 at the Philip John Commmunity Room, Barry Library at 6.30pm.

DINAS POWYS PACT: August 6 at St Mary's Church Hall, Edith Road at 7pm.

The former head returns to school

Mrs Roberts with Phil Whitcombe, present headteacher at Bryn Hafren.

BRYN HAFREN welcomed back former Headteacher, Mrs Pamela Roberts, for a tour of the school and to meet past colleagues who are still teaching there.

Mrs Roberts was headteacher for almost 20 years, and on her tour of the building was "amazed" at the changes that have taken place at the school in recent years.

Phil Whitcombe, the present headteacher, said he hoped the visit would be the first of many by Mrs Roberts, who spent a happy afternoon reminising with her past colleagues.

Are you aged between 14 and 25?

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From 12pm both days.

4 & 5 August

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKENDER

Olympic-themed street entertainment along the promenade including 'Anyone for Tennis', Balloon Modelling and Cuthbert Clatt - The Next Olympic Champion. From 12pm both days.

11 & 12 August

STREET SPORTS WEEKENDER

Join Ash Randall, professional football freestyler, and Matt Hemmings, professional BMX flatlander, for street sport performances and workshops. From 11am to 4pm both days.

18 & 19 August

ZAPCATS WEEKENDER

Fast and furious Zapcat Powerboat action. The adrenalin-pumped racing will take place on both days, promising plenty of speedy excitement. From 11am both days.

25 & 26 August

STREET ART WEEKENDER

Let loose your artistic flair by drawing on the mini cubes along the promenade or take part in free graffiti art workshops. All ages and abilities welcome. 11am to 4pm both days.

All events will take place along the prom or seafront. Please note that timings may be subject to change at short notice. For further details, please call 01446 704737 / 01446 747171 or go online at www.visitthevale.com

Pond cleaning and poetry at Porthkerry Country Park

The Wildlife Watch group with some of their work at Porthkerry Country Park.

THE Wildlife Watch group enjoyed a day of pond cleaning and exploring, followed by story telling and poetry writing after poet Mike Church joined the youngsters on a recent outing to Porthkerry Country Park.

The activity day was organised by south Wales Valleys literature development officer, Louise Richards.

All of the youngsters came away from their day having created their own piece of poetry inspired by their morning at the pond.

Mike Church joined the youngsters during their group meeting to help them translate their pond experiences into poetry.

Mel Stewart, ranger at Porthkerry, said: "The group produced some wonderful poems, which are on display in our new Forest Lodge."

The Wildlife Watch group is made up of children from throughout the Vale,aged between eight-14 years old, all brought together through their shared interest in nature.

The group meets once a month and carries out a range of environmental activities, such as planting trees, building bird boxes and willow domes, and even creating bug mansions.

'Zero tolerance' on dog fouling

IRRESPONSIBLE dog owners will face heavy fines when zero tolerance patrols begin in the Vale next week.

Private local authority support company XFOR has been enlisted by the Vale Council, to tackle dog fouling and littering, following increasing complaints by residents.

Offenders will be issued with a fixed penalty notice of £75 without warning – as the council takes a tougher stance on the problem.

"It is hoped the one-year pilot scheme will significantly improve the cleanliness of streets, parks and beaches throughout the Vale," a spokeswoman said.

Cabinet member for the environment and visible services Coun Rob Curtis commented: "Keeping our streets clear of dog excrement and litter was a key manifesto pledge of the local Labour Party which we are determined to deliver for the residents of the Vale of Glamorgan.

"Councils spend over £885 million a year on street cleansing. This money could be better spent repairing our roads, repairing our schools, or even refurbishing public toilets.

"Dog fouling is not only unpleasant, it is also dangerous. The biggest threat to public health from dog excrement is a horrible infection of the toxocariasis roundworm. Be warned that from July 30, we will be introducing a policy of zero tolerance towards littering and dog fouling.

"Only offenders who do not pick up after their dog fouls, those who drop litter and toss cigarette ends to one side may fear. Residents and visitors who do so are breaking the law, and do this at their peril".

Can you give bouncy young Sandy a home?

The GEM is in partnership with the Dog's Trust to find caring homes for animals in their charge at Bridgend Rehoming Centre
(Telephone: 01656 725219)

SANDY is a three-year-old cross-breed. She is an energetic, bright young dog who will do anything for a treat!

Sandy really enjoys her training, and is very quick to learn new tricks.

She is great fun to be around, and after a good play session with her carers, she loves nothing more than a good cuddle – and gives plenty of licks.

She is looking for a home with someone who will enjoy keeping her busy, and give her all the cuddles she wants.

She is a bouncy dog so can live with children of 11 years and up.

There is a video of Sandy with her carer at: *www.dogstrust.org.uk,* just go to the Bridgend homepage.

If you would like to offer Sandy a home, call 01656 725219, or pop in to visit us at Court Colman, Pen-y-Fai, Bridgend, CF31 4NG.

We are open from 12 noon-4pm every day except Monday, and will be opening late until 8pm on Wednesday throughout the summer months. ***LINDA FEAGAN***

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Out and About with The GEM

TY HAFAN WINNERS

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D732.

- **£2,000:** 516290.
- **The rollover, which now stands at £3,500, was not won this week.**
- **£10:** 169131, 623968, 196462, 281402, 653471, 420070, 490240, 912634, 206866, 413650, 723595, 680345, 198580, 751161, 376114, 650229, 252784, 107659, 559254, 182954.
- **£5:** 139351, 674277, 887913, 307354, 152130, 239105, 886144, 833827, 824499, 216505, 283401, 740410, 726708, 355746, 129081, 862276, 987356, 545046, 413013, 299430, 942384, 325128, 265269, 633586, 169196, 113004, 999057, 130209, 954029, 173149, 305914, 704945, 630307, 324799, 427837, 328808, 694974, 233708, 574420, 811904, 761750, 479206, 240420, 252839, 444865, 919028, 359727, 337854, 305934, 418045, 669198, 597464, 896278, 894081, 431646, 750162, 704748, 876762, 165136, 851978, 681919.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please call telephone 02920 672062.

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What's on and where

Open garden

THE garden at 68 Redlands Road, Penarth will be open to the public on Sunday next at 2pm-5pm, NOT from 11am-5pm, as previously stated.

Free summer school

A FREE, two day summer school for years 8-9 pupils interested in design and technology, is being held next week.

Co-ordinated by Careers Wales EBP (Education Business Partnership), this year's TechnoClub takes place between 9.30am and 3.30pm on July 25-26 at the Llandaff campus of Cardiff Metropolitan University.

For more details, contact Sue Gooding or Linda Canning at Careers Wales on 02920 203700.

History speaker

RHOOSE and District History Society are hosting a talk by Alan Underhill about 'Notable Welsh' on Friday, July 27 at 7.30pm in the rear hall of Rhoose Community Centre, Stewart Road. ***Tickets (available at door) are £1 adults, 50p children under 16.***

Bingo

THE management committee of Rhoose Community Hall, Stewart Road, Rhoose is holding another fundraising bingo afternoon at the hall on Saturday (July 28) at 2.30pm.

Beach clean

FRIENDS of Barry Beaches will hold their next monthly litter pick at the Knap beach on Sunday, July 29, meeting on Knap Terrace car park at 3pm.

Concert

BRIDGEND Male Voice Choir, who were National Eisteddfod winners in 2004 and 2006, are performing in St Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major next week.

The concert takes place on Friday, August 3 at 7.30pm.

Tickets; £5 adult, £3 students, from Graham Morgan at the Old White Hart, Llantwit Major. Call 01446 790132, or 07948 485325 for details.

Reunion

A REUNION has been organised for the staff of the former Western Welsh/Nation Welsh bus depot in Barry to mark the 20th anniversary of its closure.

It will take place at 7pm on August 8 at the West End Club, St Nicholas Road in Barry.

Why the Smith family are stepping out to walk for Marie Curie

IN the final countdown to the Marie Curie Cancer Care Walk Ten event at Margam Park on Saturday, August 4 – the charity is still urging people to sign up.

ABOVE: David Smith and Sharon Sweeney, who are taking part this year alongside the Bryncoch Male Voice Choir.

The event, now in its second year, has a new route, and entertainment from Bryncoch Male Voice Choir, whose chairman, Colin Williams, said: "We are fully aware of the role played by local Marie Curie nurses in their care of terminally ill patients, and we are only too happy to sing at such events."

There will also be songs from the Great American Songbook, sung by Dan and Laura Curtis.

Both acts are giving up their time completely free of charge and the charity is grateful for their support, which will help more care being provided for patients in their own homes or in the Penarth hospice.

An entire family is among those signed up for the walk. Mair Smith's brother, unfortunately, was diagnosed with a brain tumour and needed around the clock care.

Mair and her family decided that they would provide this care for him, as they wanted to make sure he could stay at home where he was happiest.

Mair said: "We were told about the Marie Curie Cancer Care nurses by our district nurse, because we'd never really understood what work they did in the area. I have to say it was a God-send, as we had them in the daytime, which was invaluable to us as a family, especially when my brother needed to be bathed.

"The nurses treated him with such care and like a human being.

"I can't thank them enough for all the kind work that they did before he passed away."

Mair's daughter Sharon decided to sign up the entire family to take part in Walk Ten to raise funds for Marie Curie Cancer Care, and they are all looking forward to the event.

Sharon said: "It's a great chance for us to do something as a family and give back to Marie Curie Cancer Care for the support they gave us earlier this year.

"I encourage everyone to sign up and take part in Walk Ten on August 4."

To register for your nearest Walk Ten, or for more information, go to: ***www.mariecurie.org.uk/walkten*** *or call* ***08700 340040****; or email:* ***claire.notman@mariecurie.org.uk.***

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Another fantastic competition exclusively for GEM readers

Win Doctor Who Experience tickets with the Glamorgan Gem

The TARDIS has landed, just minutes away from where the iconic BBC series, Dr Who, is filmed in Cardiff!

We have two adult and two childrens tickets to give away to the Dr Who Experience, the fantastic interactive experience letting visitors get up close to incredible sets, costumes and props!

After a successful run in London's Olympia 2 exhibition centre, the Dr Who Experience has just moved to its new home in Cardiff Bay, where visitors to the attraction will also be treated to new items to be on show to the public for the very first time!

For your chance to win tickets, just tell us who currently plays The Doctor?

Send your answers, marked ***'Dr Who Competition'*** to **Glamorgan Gem, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge** by August 3rd. The judge's decision is final – good luck!

Each family ticket allows entry of 4 people (2 adults and 2 children under the age of 16) into the attraction. Tickets are valid until 9 December 2012, excluding Tuesdays. Tickets are subject to availability.

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LET'S ALL GET BEHIND OUR EIGHT WELSH OLYMPIANS!

IT'S been a busy year of celebrations thus far, with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and then the Olympic torch relay, which will culminate with the start of the London Olympic Games tomorrow.

The citizens of the Vale and Bridgend county boroughs have eight sporting warriors ready to take up arms and fight for medals, but who are they, and when are they competing?

First up is footballer ***Craig Bellamy*** (33), who resides in Peterston-super-Ely, whose Olympic schedule actually gets under way a day early (today) as the Team GB men's football team face Senegal at Manchester United's Old Trafford Stadium.

The Liverpool striker has amassed 69 caps for Wales and appeared for a host of big clubs, including Manchester City, Newcastle United and Celtic. His quest for gold runs until the gold medal match on August 11.

There are two Vale swimmers for readers to cheer on. Firstly, Barry-born ***David Davies*** (27) will be competing for Team GB in the 1,500m discipline, freestyle. He holds a bronze in the 1,500m from Athens 2004, his personal best and a British record in that event, and followed that up with silver in the 10km marathon at Beijing in 2008. His discipline begins on July 28, with the medal events on Saturday, August 4.

Penarth's 19-year-old ***Ieuan Lloyd*** goes into his first Olympics as the world No 28, and will compete in the 200m freestyle and 4x200m freestyle events. A double 2011 European junior champion, he also gets under way on July 28, with his individual medal event on that day, and the 4x200m medal events taking place on Tuesday, July 31.

Cyclist ***Nicole Cooke*** (29), who grew up in Wick in the Vale and attended Brynteg Comprehensive School in Bridgend, is one of world cycling's top road racers. A gold medallist in Beijing (the first for Wales in 36 years), she also became the only cyclist that year to win the Olympic and world title double. She will compete on Sunday July 29.

Barry boxer ***Andrew Selby*** (23), ranked No 1 in the AiBA rankings, and a former Rhoose Boxing Club competitor, will box for TeamGB at flyweight. His campaign kicks off on Monday, July 30, with his division's medal events taking place on Sunday, August 12

The 400m hurdler ***Rhys Williams*** (28), from Bridgend, son of Welsh rugby legend JJ Williams, will be hoping to ease through alongside Team GB's athletics captain Dai Greene.

Having triumphed at this year's European Championships in Helsinki recently, he will be hopeful of carrying that form in to the Olympics.

His Games kick-off on August 3, with the medal events three days later on August 6.

Wales' sole triathlete is 28-year-old ***Helen Jenkins***, who lives in Bridgend.

The three-time ITU World Championships gold medallist is one of the favourites for London, and will want to put the disappointment of her 21st place finish in Beijing to rest. She competes on Saturday, August 4.

Finally, we have Penarth-born discus thrower ***Brett Morse*** (23). The British under-23 and Welsh record holder's form has dipped recently, but he will be hoping that changes in London. He will compete from August 6-7.

LEIGH GRUFFYDD SANDERS

Cadet donates to the Legion

AT a meeting of the Barry Army Cadets on July 19, Lance Corporal Jack Burnett presented £40 to the Barry branch of the Royal British Legion.

On Armed Forces Day, he was in his Army Cadet's uniform and held a collection for the RBL Poppy Appeal at his School, Barry Boys Comprehensive.

It was a fine effort by this young cadet, and he was thanked by the Barry branch at a presentation by Legion Poppy Appeal organiser, Mr Steve Whitehorn, in the presence of the Barry Town Mayor, Coun Les Sword, the Barry branch president, Mr Keith Harris, and chairman, Mr Stan Smith. DBS

ABOVE: Lance Corporal Jack Burnett hands over the cheque to the Barry branch of the Royal British Legion.

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BARRY ARTS FESTIVAL

FRIDAY 27TH JULY - SUNDAY 5TH AUGUST 2012

Fri 27th July, 8pm Ship Hotel
Tickets reduced to £4

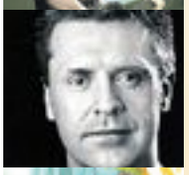
Taran

Two days before they represent Wales in the Interceltique festival in France, Barry-based folk band play their "innovative mix of traditional Welsh music welded to driving riffs and throbbing beats" . Support by folk rock band Adran D

Sat 28th July 2-3pm
Windsor Road Church £5

Del Rey

Women in American Music follows the development of the music from classic blues to swing and rocking hillbillies, through the stories of the diverse and interesting women that played music from 1900 to 1950.



Sat 28th July 8pm
West End Club £10

Del Rey

Del Rey dazzles with her mastery of the Resophonic guitar, her flawless finger picking style conjuring up two handed boogie woogie piano lines, and then she proceeds to amaze you with her dexterity on the humble ukulele, an instrument you will never look at in the same way again. Del will be supported by local band Jelly Roll Jones.

Sun 29th July: 1.00-6pm

(doors open for a performance of workshop pieces at 5pm) WRC Participants £10, performance £3

Choral day with Jeff Howard

Leading UK choral conductor Jeff Howard will lead a mix of Royal, Military and Jenkins pieces – a must for anyone involved in the current revival of choral singing. Please bring your own refreshments.

Mon 30th July 10am onwards
WRC Free

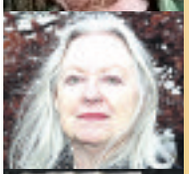
Mural day

Becci Holmes, a local artist, has designed a mural on the theme of Barry. Anyone can come along and help paint a section between 10-12 and 2-4. Children 11 and under accompanied by an adult. The finished mural will be on display at Windsor Rd on Friday 3rd August. Other craft activities and practical demonstrations will be happening during this family-friendly day Local authors including Catherine Jones, Dave Alexander and Michelle Briscombe will be talking about their books between 1.30 and 4pm.

Tues 31st July 8pm
Masonic Hall £12

Summer songs - with Tim & Suzannah

Compered by local funny guy Mark Thompson, chill out to timeless classics by artists such as Natalie Cole, Michael Buble, Norah Jones and Bobby Darin. Then when the sun goes down get up and dance to the perfect summer playlist! Ticket includes buffet and close up magic with Simon.



Wed 1st August 7.30 Board Room, Dock Offices £10

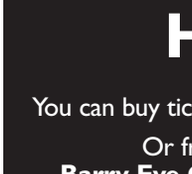
Poetry reading by Grahame Davies and Tony Curtis

Tony Curtis and Graham Davies will read from their own work. Tony was born in Carmarthen and now lives in Barry. Grahame is a Welsh poet and writer who has won numerous prizes, including the Wales Book of the Year Award.

Thur 2nd August 11am-1pm
Barry Library £10

Creative writing workshop with Tony Curtis.

Only 2 spaces left! Contact dot.connell@virgin.net to book one of the final places



Thur 2nd August 8pm
Masonic Hall £10

Boyd Clack

Boyd comes to Barry Arts Festival on Thursday the 2nd of August to perform for the first half of the open mic night at the Masonic Hall, Barry. Festival organisers were at a loss to know how to replace the Amigos who have sadly been forced to withdraw from the concert planned for that night and they have planned an open mic fundraiser for Ty Hapus dementia centre in Barry.

Fri 3rd August 7.30pm Board Room, Dock Offices £12

Gillian Clarke

The National Poet of Wales will read and reminisce about her childhood in Barry. Gillian Clarke was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry 2010 and the Wilfred Owen Award 2012.

Sun 5th August 8pm Ship Hotel (upstairs room) £3

Barry musician & sound artist Chris Young premieres "Bricks and mortar", written for the festival.

Wall-hanging Project

All over Barry and beyond squares have been made for a commemorative wall-hanging. It has been sewn together and is now over 7ft tall and 6ft wide. Come and see it on Friday the 3rd August between 10 and 4pm in WRC. The community mural will also be on display.

THE FRINGE

These events are being run by partner organisations

Mon 30th July - Fri 3rd August 10am-4pm Crossway Methodist Church

Pukka's Summer Sizzler - Week of performing fun on the theme "boy bands". Ages 3-10. Pukka is also offering childcare daily from 8-10am, and 4-6pm for £10 per session. The whole package £160 for the week.

Mon 13th - Fri 17th Aug 10am-4pm

Pukka's (2nd) Summer Sizzler - Another week of performing fun with "Chicago". Ages 10+. £80 for the 5 days.

For bookings and details contact Sarah-07917881220 or email pukkaproductions@yahoo.co.uk

Fri 3rd August 10am-4pm WRC

Baruc Art Group Open Day. Come and see the work of Windsor Road Church's resident artists! Free

Fri 3rd August 2-4pm WRC

Alan Sinclair, Affordable Housing Enabler, will be available to clarify and discuss a project aimed at providing studio space/accommodation for local artists, hopefully in the Barry area.

Mon 30th July-Fri 3rd August 10am-4pm WRC Free

PIPS The Positive Image Photographic Society will display a selection of prints. Club members will also be available to answer questions about photography and the club.

VOGA Vale of Glamorgan Artists are exhibiting work in various media.

Barry Camera Club a display of members' work from the past year.

Local unaffiliated artists will also be exhibiting

Mon 30th July-Fri 3rd August 11am-5pm Canonhill Art Space, Canon St

Art4u Exhibition of "Between the Lines", Glyn Pooley's drawings and photographs of local people. Free but donations welcome. www.art4uwales.org.uk

Sun 29th July 2-8pm Knap Lake

Art4u Friendship Concert 29th July 2-8pm. Come and enjoy the sounds and relaxed atmosphere of Art4U's second gathering of talented musicians, local and not-so-local. Free, but donations welcome. www.art4uwales.org.uk

Tue 31st July 12-1pm, and 1-2.30pm WRC £4

Superstars director Chris Bullen leads street dance workshops. 12-1pm age 10-13, 1-2.30pm age 14+ Booking essential. Phone Chris on 07531814820.

Sat/Sun 4th and 5th of August 2-6pm Victoria Park, Barry

It's back! And it's going to be even better than last year's huge success. Local musicians, singers and choirs including Barry Ladies, Vale Voices and Barry Male Voice come together on the Saturday. The Sunday will rock with bands and Peter Karrie.

HOW TO BUY TICKETS:

You can buy tickets in two ways: Online at **www.porthceri.co.uk** (via Paypal).

Or from local outlets: **Gifted** 4 High Street, Barry CF62 7DZ, 01446 721339
Barry Eye Centre 87 Holton Road, Barry CF63 4HG, 01446 745606, barryeyecentre.co.uk
JPL Sound 267 Holton Road, Barry CF63 4HT, 01446 722711, www.jplsound.co.uk

POWER PEDALLING FROM PIER TO PIER

NEIL GRIFFITHS AND RYAN PAYNE.

TWO adventurous charity fundraisers cycled 200 miles from Bangor pier to Penarth pier in 14 hours for the Bridgend-based Buy As You View at 40 charity fund.

Neil Griffiths and Ryan Payne travelled through the heart of Wales, including Snowdonia National Park and the Brecon Beacons before finishing their journey in Penarth.

Buy As You View is currently aiming to raise £40,000 for seven separate charities across the regions they operate in to celebrate their 40th anniversary.

Neil Griffiths, warehouse distributor at Buy As You View, said: "I am no stranger to cycling long distances as I cycle 200 miles to and from work every week, but I have never attempted that distance in just 14 hours before.

"Ryan and I knew it was going to be a challenge, especially as we had to cycle through the winding, steep country roads in the Snowdonia National Park - but it was fantastic."

'Dairy farmers being squeezed out of existence'

– SAYS CONSERVATIVE MP

ABOVE: Alun Cairns MP, Richard Street, Abigail Reader, John Hanks,and Emma Street at the meeting to urge supermarkets and milk processors not to cut their prices.

VALE MP Alun Cairns last week threw his weight behind local diary farmers protesting against cuts in milk prices paid by supermarkets.

He agreed with farmers at a protest meeting in Westminster that they were "being squeezed out of existence".

The meeting involved hundreds of farmers from across the UK, including many from the local area.

Mr Cairns welcomed a pledge of £5million from the UK Government to support the dairy industry, but he stated that the Welsh dairy industry needs urgent support from the Welsh Government to protect jobs, as producers face cuts in farm-gate prices.

"Last week, serious concerns were raised about the impact of a cut of 1.7 pence per litre imposed by Robert Wiseman Dairies. Many milk processors have cut the price paid to dairy farmers for this liquid milk in recent times.

"These cuts mean that most farmers would be selling milk for less than it costs to produce," the MP said.

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40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance	40p per mile travelling allowance

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facebook.com/gemnews or follow @gem_news

PENARTH AND DISTRICT RAMBLERS

Ramblers follow in historic tram tracks

RECENTLY, Phil and Barrie stepped in to lead a replacement walk for Penarth and District Ramblers, and having parked at the Cray (Crai) reservoir, the group of 10 walkers set off on an overcast morning, with sunny periods throughout the day.

The reservoir was built between 1898 and 1906 by the Swansea Corporation, originally to supply water to the Swansea area in an area known for its high rainfall and, more importantly, upstream from the industrialised area of the Tawe Valley.

They headed south-east across the wet and boggy moorland and followed the Nant Gyhirych river, climbing up into the forest where they stopped for morning coffee before continuing along forestry paths to Bwlch y Duwynt.

Changing course, they turned southwest, met a group of youngsters who were taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's gold award scheme and climbed gently up Fan Gyhirych, where the trig point stands at 725-metres, with its 360-degree spectacular views.

John Christie, a wealthy Scottish entrepreneur, bought the Crown Allotment of Fforest Fawr (the great forest) in 1819 and built the Brecon Forest Tramroad, which crossed the north and west flanks of Fan Gyhirych.

Later , the Neath and Brecon Railway was constructed, which followed part of the route of the old tram road and which eventually closed in the 1960s.

After lunch, the group moved on to another forest between the Nant Byfre and Nant yr Wydd streams and experienced a sharp rain shower, then trekked a very wet track back to their cars.

On July 28, meet at 9am at Cogan for an 8.5-mile moderate/hard walk at Parc Cwm Darran near Bargoed.

Contact Clive on 029 2065 4156.

On August 2, meet at 7pm opposite the Colcot Arms pub on Colcot Road, Barry for a three or four-mile easy/moderate walk at New and Old Wallace Farms.

Contact Geraint on 029 2051 5278.

JOY STRANGWARD

Music tuition in memory of young Cerys

THE Cerys Potter Foundation is supporting the Cardiff county and Vale of Glamorgan Music Service by funding innovative music tuition at two Vale schools.

The foundation was set up in memory of Cerys Potter, aged nine, who died in a rafting accident in Turkey in 2010.

Cadoxton Primary School and St Joseph's Primary School were given a total of £6,000 for lessons in string instruments and African drumming.

Cerys' mum, Julie Potter, said: "This is inclusive – every child in the class will be given the same opportunity to learn, and if there is a shining talent, we may be able to offer a disadvantaged child that extra bit of support."

Cerys loved singing, dancing, acting, and playing the piano and recorder. The committee felt that it would be an excellent opportunity for the charity to give its support to two classes in Vale schools.

The foundation aims to provide financial support, equipment and resources to assist children who might not otherwise have the opportunities to nurture and develop performing arts and musical talent.

For more information on the Cerys Potter Foundation, visit: ***www.ceryspotterfoundation.org.***

Show boosts appeal

THE Vintage Model Railway Exhibition organised by Bernard Honeysett on July 15 in aid of All Saints Organ Appeal, raised £280.

A steady stream of visitors throughout the day included young children, dads and grandparents enjoying the two running lines, which consisted of a variety of locomotives, including a Clockwork No2 Special loco that had not turned a wheel for 50 years, gallantly managing three circuits.

The event also included many other items within the static display, prior to 1928 to more modern replica locomotives, and rolling stock from the 1930s and 1940s.

The Hogwarts' Express was enjoyed by all (including Emma the Asst Curate) with its working lights and the engine emitting real smoke.

Thanks also to Alun Thomas, who sold nearly all his cardboard house models and donated his takings to the event.

Grateful thanks to Vina for organising the raffle, and Mark, Kate and Bernard for supporting refreshments and setting up the event.

Spooky memory of Dunraven Castle!

WITH reference to a recent GEM article, my sister and I attended a Workers' Educational Association (WEA) course at Dunraven Castle in about 1949.

We stayed there over one weekend together with other students; the female students slept in a dormitory and presumably so did the men.

Large wardrobes, as big as a small room, were situated in the dormitory, available for us to hang the few clothes we had brought with us.

We had been told about the ghostly presence of the 'Blue Lady' who was reputed to haunt the castle. Come bedtime, I retreated into one of the wardrobes to change into my 'blue nightdress'. Not noticing that I was absent from the main room, lights were turned off.

Imagine how the students felt when I suddenly emerged from the wardrobe in my blue nightdress...shock at first and then lots of laughter!

At the end of the weekend, a photograph was taken of the whole group, male and female students. I haven't got a copy of it, which is a pity, as it would provide an interesting reminder of the many WEA classes held there over several years.

The WEA still carries out its core duty of providing educational opportunities for the general community.

Dilys Colbourne
Barry

Roadworks

ROADWORKS: A4055 Leckwith Road, Leckwith;

Barry Docks Link Road, junction of Coldbrook Road and Argae Lane;

A48 Cowbridge bypass and A48 Sycamore Cross;

A4050 Port Road, junction with Pencoedtre Lane, Barry.

The Bear Hotel, Cowbridge

How a casual chat in the bar of his home-town local became a life-changing experience for hotel owner

FLASHBACK: Julian Hitchcock – the youngest hotel manager in the country.

WHEN a 22-year-old Vale man on a trainee work placement at London's Hotel Europa came home for the weekend and popped into the bar of his 'local' for a pint with some pals, little did he realise it would be a life-changing experience.

For his 'local' was one of Cowbridge's most iconic landmarks, the historic Bear Hotel, whose roots date back to the founding of the town in the 13th century by Richard de Clare, Lord of Glamorgan, who seized the manor of Llanbleddian in 1245, and subsequently granted Cowbridge its first charter in 1254.

The young Vale man in question was Julian Hitchcock, and a casual chat over the bar with the manager that night in 1982 led to the former student at Cardiff College of Food & Technology being offered a job on the spot – as the hotel's assistant manager!

When the manager left just a few months late, for pastures new, the then owner, Porthcawl businessman Howard Lewis, offered a dumbstruck Julian the chance to become the youngest hotel manager in Britain.

(Remarkably, yet another chance encounter in the front bar of The Bear was also to change the direction of his life – for it was there that he met his future wife, Esther).

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

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The Bear Hotel, Cowbridge

After the low point came the take-off!

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

Earlier, during a brief period on the staff of the Midland Bank in Cowbridge (now HSBC), a customer had advised a frustrated Julian to "*take a change of direction*" and set him on a rollercoaster ride of ever-rapid career developments.

In 1984, he was asked to take over the Three Salmons at Usk, in addition to managing The Bear (he also became responsible for the company's Soul Plaice and Tappers Bar in Mill Lane, Cardiff) and, subsequently, the St Mellons Hotel & Country Club – *at the age of just 26.*

A high point came in 1990 when he was asked to take charge of the 4-star New House Country Hotel, which was opened in 1990 by the then Welsh Secretary of State, Peter Walker – but the low point came a year later, when recession forced the whole group into receivership.

Julian and Esther were forced to drastically re-assess and acquired the Bush Inn at St Hilary, concentrating all of their efforts there, until one day in May 1992, an accountant friend, Peter Dewey, suggested that he buy The Bear.

The couple and their three children, Fred, Charles and Lydia (*their youngest son, Harry, came along later*) took over the Bear, in partnership with Julian's brother, Mark, and Peter, leaving Julian's mum in charge at the Bush, which has since been sold.

The mellow old Cowbridge building, which had begun life as a medieval town house for local gentry, and then became a noted 18th century coaching inn, was "*quite run down*", and badly in need of a modern makeover, Julian recalls.

It has since undergone an extensive but discreet refurbishment over several years, designed to ease it painlessly into the 21st century – epitomised by the mysterious 'Bear Pit' vault.

Believed to date back to the 12th-13th century, it became a smart, unique restaurant, as the one-time hostelry was transformed into a 36-bedroom hotel – "*all but one are double rooms*" (Julian says proudly) with 64 full and part time staff, and all mod cons – without losing the essential olde worlde charm that makes it such an enduring social magnet for local diners and visitors alike.

ABOVE: Fundraising group The Bear Back Riders: Julian (far left), wife Esther, Freddie Hitchcock, Geoff and Isabel Graham, Paul and Caroline Hole and Nigel and Marianne England, pictured at a fundraising summer ball in the New House Country Hotel, Cardiff.

The old Bear's younger sibling, Oscar's, opened a few doors away in 2005 (and another in Cardiff), but the heartening success story of a local business family 'made good' does not end there.

Its expanded Town & Country Hotels' portfolio has included the four-star New House Hotel, Cardiff, The Three Salmons at Usk (later sold), and the Coed-y-Mwstwr at Coychurch.

In 2004, Town & Country Catering was launched, and this year has achieved a record – with 42 wedding functions booked in marquees and castles around Wales.

However, Julian's special affection for the old Bear at Cowbridge is clear, as he emphasises concern for maintaining its unique, historic character, while ensuring that it fulfils the ever-changing demands of a more modern age.

Like all venerable old buildings steeped in history, the Bear retains an air of mystery, along (of course) with some non-paying 'guests'..."*Yes, we do have a couple of resident ghosts here*" says Julian with a smile.

It seems there had been a blaze at the hotel during the early part of the last century in which a seven-year-old girl had sadly perished:

"On separate occasions, three different couples staying here have each reported seeing an image of their seven-year-old daughter in the room and then a strong smell of burning."

In reception, where there used to be a staircase, he recalls, a porter had reported seeing a pair of legs disappearing up the non-existent staircase and directly into the ceiling!

Picture: Mike Wilcock.

The courtyard at The Bear affords customers an outdoor seated area to enjoy their food.

"I had a bad experience myself. While working late here one night on paperwork I heard a voice crying out – '*Help me!*'

"At first, I thought it was someone larking about, but when I heard it again in reception at 2.30 in the morning, I called the police and a constable came to check it out. "*However, we found nothing*," Julian adds.

DON JOHN

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You'll be spoilt for choice when it comes to menus for as well as the gastro menu, there are regularly changing specials and desserts to die for. All meals are prepared freshly to order but, after all, if it's worth having, it's worth waiting for and at The Bear, that certainly is the case.

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EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY JOIN TOGETHER – AND WELCOME EISTEDDFOD TO THE VALE

by PHILIP IRWIN

THE imminent arrival of the National Eisteddfod in Llandow, has been welcomed by local businesses and community councils in the area – and they are confident that the many visitors will see the Vale looking its best!

In fact, it is only just over a week since the Vale held its 'Best Kept Village' competition (won by Ystradowen), and that means local hamlets are pristine.

Llantwit Major and Cowbridge, the two nearest towns to the Eisteddfod site, have been making plans to give visitors a warm welcome.

As Llantwit is the point of arrival for anyone travelling to the Eisteddfod by rail, and as Cowbridge can expect bus passengers from Cardiff and Bridgend, both towns will have shuttle buses buzzing back and fore, taking people to the Maes.

It also means that Eisteddfod visitors who fancy a break, or a change of scenery, can pop into one or both towns to have a look around.

As a result, in Cowbridge the chamber of trade has organised a rota of 'meeters and greeters' from local comprehensive schools – charged with letting visitors know what they can see and do in the town.

Natalie Isaac, from Cowbridge Chamber of Trade, said: "The 'meeters and greeters' will be young people from local schools – including some Welsh speakers – who will be there as part of their Welsh Baccalaureatte studies.

"They will be able to direct visitors to attractions such as the Physic Garden, and they will be able to advise on where to eat, and let people know about those 'nooks and crannies' in the town which they might otherwise not notice."

The chamber of trade has also made a large quantity of bunting available to retailers, and the town should be proudly displaying the Eisteddfod colours by the time the jamboree starts.

In Llantwit Major, the Eisteddfod is due to be welcomed with a marathon bell-ringing effort from St Illtud's Church, where a 'full peal of bells' – lasting three hours – is to be rung at 10am on Saturday, August 4.

The town's chamber of trade has also invested in Eisteddfod bunting, and has also bought Welsh flags for flagpoles around the town.

Janet Moisan of the Llantwit Major Chamber of Trade told The GEM: "There should be even more bunting up by the time the Eisteddfod starts, as the Vale Council has said that it will be putting its own up, too!"

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

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ONLY MEN ALOUD. (SEE PAGE 4)

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EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

CEREMONIES THAT CELEBRATE CENTURIES OF WELSH CULTURE

Story of the Gorsedd
by SIONED EDWARDS

THE Gorsedd ceremonies are some of the most memorable moments at any National Eisteddfod.

The Pavilion lights are dimmed and an expectant hush descends upon the capacity audience as they await the fanfare of horns.

Lights sweep across a sea of faces until one, and only one, person rises. On stage, the Archdruid stands in his golden regalia while behind him, the green, blue and white robed rows of Gorsedd members make for a striking backcloth.

For the writers themselves, the drama will have started months before, as they rush to get their entries in on time, using pseudonyms, instead of their real names.

The winner's identity will be kept a very close secret known to only a few. The rest of the ceremony is just thrilling – it is one of the great spectacles of Welsh culture. The Gorsedd of the Bards is a society of poets, writers, musicians, artists and individuals who have made a notable contribution to the nation, its language and culture.

It is the Gorsedd who are responsible for the pageantry of the National Eisteddfod of Wales and it organises and presents the colourful and dramatic ceremonies which are held during the festival.

The Gorsedd, as you may have read recently in The GEM, was the creative invention of Iolo Morganwg, one of Wales' most famous and eccentric scholars, who felt that it should be made known that the Welsh were the direct descendants of Celtic culture and heritage.

Iolo Morgannwg (or Edward Williams to give him his real name) was born at Pen-onn, near Llancarfan, and was raised in the village of Flemingston in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Gorsedd of Bards first came together in 1792, not in Wales as you might expect, but on Primrose Hill in London.

It made its first appearance at the Eisteddfod in Carmarthen in 1819, and from the time that the National was born in 1860/1861 its close association with the Festival has remained. The head of the Gorsedd of Bards is the Archdruid, who is elected for a term of three years, and is responsible for conducting the Gorsedd ceremonies during the Proclamation and Eisteddfod week.

The current Archdruid is T James Jones, or Jim Parc Nest, to give his bardic name.

The ceremony in which the winning poet is chaired for composing a collection of poems, an ode or other poem – all in strict metres on a specific subject, is one of the highlights of the Gorsedd of the Bards' pageantry in every National Eisteddfod. It is held on the Friday afternoon of the Eisteddfod week.

It is a very old ceremony. The custom of competing for a chair in the King's court was already well-established in Hywel Dda's time in the tenth century and when the Lord Rhys held his Eisteddfod.

In Cardigan in 1176, the prize for the chief poet and chief musician was a chair each.

Having re-established the eisteddfodic movement in Bala in 1789, winning the Chair became the ambition of every poet, although there was no Gorsedd ceremony associated with it yet.

It was at the first provincial Eisteddfod in Dyfed/Dinefwr in Carmarthen in 1819 that Iolo succeeded in linking the rites of the Gorsedd of the Bards with the ceremony of Chairing the winning Bard.

Vale of Glamorgan Eisteddfod proclamation ceremony, June 2011.

In 1867, it was decided to assign the Chair for an ode in strict metre and to award a Crown for the best *pryddest* in free metre.

The Chairing ceremony at 1917 Birkenhead Eisteddfod was both memorable and harrowing.

Hedd Wyn was the bardic name of Ellis Humphrey Evans, a Trawsfynydd shepherd and gifted poet.

Ellis had joined the thousands of soldiers serving on the Western Front during World War I and drew upon his wartime experiences to write the poem Yr Arwr (The Hero), which describes the realities of war for both the soldiers and their families back home.

Back in Birkenhead, as the judges called out the name of the victorious bard, there was silence in the auditorium. Hedd Wyn had been killed six weeks earlier on July 31, 1917, during the battle for Pilckem Ridge, Ypres.

The Crowning ceremony which is held on the Monday of the Eisteddfod week is equally impressive.

For the first time during the Eisteddfod week, the Flower Dance will be performed, a colourful part of the Gorsedd ceremonies.

Local girls are chosen to perform the dance, which is based on a pattern of flower gathering from the fields.

Girls aged 9–11 from all over the Vale of Glamorgan were invited to an open audition last year to select the Flower Dancers; 34 were successful and performed the dance for the first time at the Proclamation Ceremony in Barry held in June 2011.

The dance portrays the gathering of meadow flowers and the girls dress in green tunics adorned with wild flowers. However. it is a comparatively recent rite.

It was performed for the first time at the Machynlleth Proclamation ceremony in 1936 and it was devised by Cynan, the Gorsedd Recorder, and junior school teachers from the area.

One of the most prominent roles played during these ceremonies will be that by ex-Scarlets and Wales rugby star turned coach, Robin McBryde, as the Grand Sword Bearer.

He will carry the Great Gorsedd sword during the Gorsedd processions and, during the ceremonies themselves, holding it aloft to the Archdruid's call for peace.Carrying a sword was one of the rituals in Iolo Morganwg's first Gorsedd held in Primrose Hill.

Iolo, a pacifist, wanted to emphasise that the Bards met in peace and when a naked sword was placed on the Logan Stone (the main stone in the middle of the Gorsedd Circle where the Archdruid stands) they proceeded to sheath it as a symbol of peace in Gorsedd.

In 1888, Phillip Yorke of Erddig Hall, presented a ceremonial sword to the Gorsedd, which was used until the turn of the century. Then, in 1899, Professor Hubert Herkomer designed a Grand Sword for the Gorsedd.

This is the Grand Sword still in use today.

The Gorsedd Ceremonies at the Vale of Glamorgan Eisteddfod will be held on Monday, August 6 (Crowning ceremony), Wednesday August 8 (Literary medal) and Friday, August 10 (Chairing ceremony).

Tickets for the ceremonies, which include field admission for that day, are now on sale and available to buy from the Eisteddfod website: www.eisteddfod.org.uk or by phoning the ticket hotline on 0845 4090 800.

David Melding

Regional AM for South Wales Central

"As a Welsh learner who lives in Penarth, it gives me particular pleasure to welcome the Eisteddfod to the Vale of Glamorgan"

Residents of South Wales Central can contact my office for help and advice:
29 High Street, Barry CF62 7EB.

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Croeso i'r Brifwyl

AR ran Pwyllgor Gwaith Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg, mae'n bleser gennyf eich croesawu i'r Brifwyl eleni.

Bu trigolion y Fro wrthi'n ddiwyd am bron i ddwy flynedd yn paratoi, ac o'r diwedd, mae'r Maes ar ei draed a thros yr wythnos nesaf bydd llygaid Cymru gyfan arnom wrth i ni groesawu 150,000 – 160,000 o ymwelwyr i'r ardal.

Mawr yw ein diolch i bawb a fu mor gefnogol wrth i ni baratoi ar gyfer yr Eisteddfod. Mae'r ymateb yma yn ardal y Fro wedi bod yn ardderchog, ac rwy'n sicr y bydd pawb sy'n ymweld ag Eisteddfod Bro Morgannwg yn cael modd i fyw, a chroeso cynnes gan yr ardal, ar y Maes, yn ein trefi a'n pentrefi deniadol neu wrth ymweld ag un o'n hatyniadau lleol.

Rydym yn edrych ymlaen i groesawu ffyddloniaid yr Eisteddfod, sydd wedi bod yn paratoi i ddod atom ers amser, ond bydd y croeso yr un mor frwd ar gyfer unrhyw un sy'n dod atom am y tro cyntaf, a rydym yn annog trigolion y Fro yn arbennig i ddod draw i'r Maes i weld beth sydd ar gael.

Eleni, mae mwy o weithgareddau teuluol nag erioed o'r blaen, ac rwy'n mawr obeithio y bydd digonedd i gadw'r teulu cyfan yn ddiwyd am oriau lawer.

Dyma'r tro cyntaf i'r Eisteddfod ymweld ag ardal Bro Morgannwg ers 1968. Gadawodd yr Eisteddfod honno ei hôl ar genhedlaeth gyfan, a'n gobaith yw y bydd y Gymraeg ym Mro Morgannwg yn ffynnu ymhellach yn sgil ei hymweliad y tro hwn, ac y bydd trigolion lleol yn cael modd i fyw ym Mhrifwyl ein gwlad.

Diolch am eich cefnogaeth a mwynhewch yr w^yl.

Dr Dylan Jones, chair of the Vale of Glamorgan Eisteddfod Executive Committee.

Welcome to the Eisteddfod

ON behalf of the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod Executive, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this year's festival.

Local residents across the region have worked tirelessly for the past two years fundraising and raising awareness, and at last, the Maes is in place. Over the next week, the eyes of Wales will be upon us, as we welcome between 150,000 and 160,000 visitors to the region.

We are grateful for all the support as we prepared for the Eisteddfod, and I am sure that everyone visiting this year's festival will enjoy a real Vale of Glamorgan welcome, whether it's on the Maes itself, in one of our attractive towns or villages, or when visiting one of the many local attractions.

We look forward to welcoming the Eisteddfod stalwarts who attend the festival annually, but the welcome will be just as warm for everyone coming to see us for the first time; and we encourage all of you to come to the Maes to see what's on offer.

There's more family activities than ever before at this year's event, and I very much hope that you'll have a day to remember.

This is the Eisteddfod's first visit to the Vale since 1968, and the festival left a lasting impact on a generation of local residents 44 years ago.

Let's work together to ensure the same thing happens again, and that we see the language and the culture of Wales go from strength to strength across the Vale in years to come.

Thank you for your support and enjoy the Eisteddfod.

DYLAN JONES
Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor Gwaith/Executive Committee Chair

The GEM Souvenir Special

EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

CORONAU EISTEDDFODAU BRO MORGANNWG

UN o'r prif wobrau a ddyfernir mewn unrhyw Eisteddfod yw'r Goron a roddir i'r Bryddest orau. Mewn seremoni arbennig a gynhelir ar Ddydd Llun yr Eisteddfod, fe goronir Bardd gan yr Archdderwydd mewn seremoni ysblennydd.

Dyma un o ddigwyddiadau mwyaf cofiadwy unrhyw Eisteddfod. Mae golau'r Pafiliwn yn cael ei bylu ac mae ton o dawelwch yn disgyn dros y gynulleidfa wrth iddynt aros am alwad y Cyrn Gwlad.

Ysgubir golau ar draws y pafiliwn cyn cyrraedd un man lle sefir y bardd buddugol ar ei d/thraed. Saif yr Archdderwydd ar y llwyfan yn ei regalia aur gyda'r Orsedd tu cefn iddo yn barod i gyfarch y bardd ar y llwyfan.

I'r beirdd ei hunain dyma benllanw misoedd o aros ers postio'r gwaith erbyn y dyddiad cau gan ddefnyddio ffug enw yn hytrach na'i enwau bob dydd. Cedwir enw'r bardd buddugol yn gudd, gyda dim ond ychydig yn gwybod y gyfrinach. Mae'r seremoni yn un gwefreiddiol – un o uchafbwyntiau celfyddyd Cymraeg.

Testun y Goron eleni yw 'Ynys' gyda Cen Williams, Cyril Jones a Penri Roberts yn beirniadu. Noddir y Goron gan Gyngor Bro Morgannwg ac efallai bod rhai ohonoch wedi darllen yn ddiweddar fod y gemydd lleol Anne Morgan o Benarth wedi ei dewis i greu y Goron.

Ond beth am seremoniau Coroni'r ddwy Eisteddfod arall sydd wedi ymweld â'r Fro?

1920: Noddwyd y Goron gan Mr TH Morley o Sully a rhoddwyd gwerth o £30 arni. Arddangoswyd y goron cyn yr Eisteddfod yn siop ffenest John Jones & Co, 114 Holton Road y Bari.

Dyfarnwyd y goron i löwr ifanc, James Evans, yn wreiddiol o Feulah, Castell Newydd Emlyn ond ar y pryd yn byw yn Ynyshir, Rhondda. Dyma'r tro cyntaf i James Evans ennill y goron yn y Genedlaethol er iddo ennill sawl tro mewn Eisteddfodau lleol.

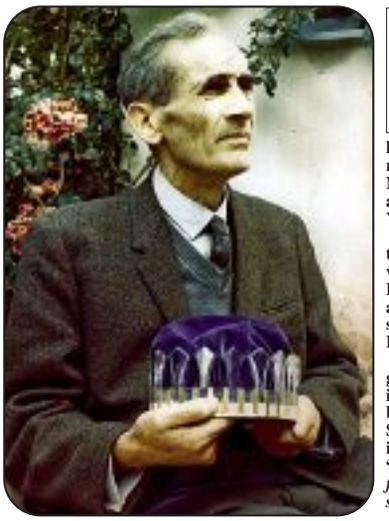
Wedi dilyn cwrs gradd ym Mhrifysgol Cymru fe'i hyfforddwyd ar gyfer y weinidogaeth ond yn ôl y South Wales News bu rhaid iddo "relinquish the pulpit for the pit due to a speech impediment".

Yn ôl yr adroddiad roedd yr olygfa yn y pafiliwn yn un ysbrydoledig gyda thorf o rhwng 10,000 - 12,000 yn bresennol gyda'r Archdderwydd Dyfed wrth y llyw.

Yr Athro WJ Gruffydd oedd yn traddodi'r feirniadaeth a darganfuwyd yn fuan nad oedd y dorf helaeth yn gallu ei glywed ac felly bu'n rhaid ffeindio 'megaphone' ar gyfer y feirniadaeth.

Roedd yn feirniadaeth hallt fodd bynnag, gyda'r beirniad yn nodi taw dim ond tri o'r un deg saith a ymgeisiodd oedd yn werth unrhyw ystyriaeth.

Yn ôl y Western Mail pan roddwyd y Goron ar ben y bardd roedd yn rhy fach a phan gododd ar ei draed fe gwympodd y goron i'r llawr!



LEFT: L Haydn Lewis, winner of the Crown at the 1968 Eisteddfod in Barry.

Cafwyd cyntaf arall yn ystod yr Eisteddfod hefyd gan i'r gerdd fuddugol gael ei chyhoeddi am y tro cyntaf yn union ar ôl y seremoni.

1968: Noddwyd Coron Eisteddfod y Bari 1968 gan Mr a Mrs Dan Evans y Bari ac roedd yn nodweddiadol am y ffaith mai plastig oedd y prif ddefnydd. Penderfynwyd y byddai'n symbolig i ddefnyddio'r plastig yn y cynllun gan mai cynhyrchu plastig oedd un o brif ddiwydiannau'r dref.

Creuwyd y goron gan Keith Redfern oedd ar y pryd yn un o'r prif gynllunwyr oedd yn gweithio gyda'r defnydd. Defnyddwyd plastig ac arian yn y cynllun gyda melfed porffor yn gorffen y gwaith i greu coron a ddisgrifiwyd ar y pryd yn y Faner fel: " Portread celfydd o goron mewn defnydd cyfoes".

Derbyniwyd 22 o gerddi ar y testun 'Meini' gyda phryddest gweinidog o'r Rhondda, Parch Haydn Lewis oedd yn enedigol o Geredigion, yn fuddugol. Ysbydoliwyd y gerdd gan farwolaeth ei unig ferch ddeng mlynedd yn gynt ac roedd y gerdd yn ddilyniant o'r gerdd a enillodd Coron Eisteddfod Dyffryn Maelor iddo yn 1961.

Daeth y dyfarniad fodd bynnag yn dilyn anghytundeb llwyr rhwng y beirniad, a'r unig ffordd i ddatrys y broblem oedd i ddod â beirniad annibynno i mewn. Roedd y tri beirniad; Dr Thomas Parry, Parch.

Euros Bowen a Waldo Williams yn gytûn ar y tri bardd gorau ymhlith y 22 ond roedd pob un yn ffafrio cerdd wahanol. Am y tro cyntaf yn eu hanes bu'n rhaid i Gyngor yr Eisteddfod apwyntio beirniad annibynnol a gofynnwyd i Alun Llywelyn Williams i benderfynu rhwng y tri ac fe ddewisodd cerdd Haydn Lewis.

Vale of Glamorgan Eisteddfod Crown

ONE of the main prizes awarded at any Eisteddfod is the Crown – awarded for the best Pryddest (long poem in free metre) during a special ceremony, which is held on the Monday of the Eisteddfod week – the winning poet being crowned by the Archdruid in a spectacular ceremony.

The subject for this year's Crown is 'Ynys' (Island) and it will be adjudicated by Cen Williams, Cyril Jones and Penri Roberts. The Crown is sponsored by the Vale of Glamorgan Council and you may have read recently that local jeweller, Anne Morgan from Penarth, was chosen to design and create the Crown.

But what of the Crowning ceremonies of the two other Eisteddfodau that have visited the Vale?

1920: The Crown was sponsored by Mr TH Morley JP of Sully, valued at £30 and was displayed in Barry in the shop window of John Jones & Co Drapers at 114 Holton Road.

The Crown was awarded to a young collier, James Evans, originally from Beulah, Newcastle Emlyn, but at the time living in Ynyshir, Rhondda.

This was the first time James Evans had won the National Eisteddfod Crown, although he had won several crowns at local Eisteddfodau.

He was a university graduate who trained initially as a Minister, but according to the South Wales News writing at the time, had to: "*relinquish the pulpit for the pit due to a speech impediment*".

The scene in the pavilion during the ceremony was reportedly inspiring, with an estimated 10,000-12,000 people present and the Archdruid, Dyfed in charge of proceedings.

One of the adjudicators, Professor WJ Gruffydd, who soon found that his voice would not carry to the large crowd present, had to resort to using a megaphone.

He delivered a scathing critique of those who had entered the Crown competition, noting that only three of the 17 were worthy of consideration.

According to the Western Mail, when the Crown was placed on the head of the winning bard it was found to be too small, and a great deal of amusement was caused when the poet rose from his knees, the Crown slipped from his head on to the stage.

For the first time, the winning poet's work was published immediately after the ceremony.

1968: The 1968 Barry Eisteddfod Crown was sponsored by Mr & Mrs Dan Evans of Barry. It was noteworthy, as the main material used in the Crown was plastic.

It was decided that as the production of plastic was one of the main industries associated with Barry, it would be symbolic to use the material in the design.

The Crown was designed and created by Keith Redfern, who was one of the leading designers working with the material at the time.

Both plastic and silver were used and the Crown was finished with purple velvet to create what was described at the time as an: "*Artistic crown using contemporary materials*".

Some 22 poems were submitted for the competition, the subject of which was Meini (Stones) and the Crown was won by Rhondda Minister, the Rev Haydn Lewis, who was originally from Ceredigion. The poem was inspired by the death 10 years previously of his only daughter, and was a continuation of the poem which won Rev Lewis the Crown at the 1961 Maelor Valley Eisteddfod.

The award, however, came only after a very unusual deadlock between the adjudicators – Dr Thomas Parry, Rev Euros Bowen and Waldo Williams.

Each of the three wanted to award the Crown to a different poet, and the argument could only be resolved by inviting an outsider to decide.

The Eisteddfod Council, for the first time in its history, then appointed Alun Llywelyn Williams to choose between the three poems and he chose the poem written by Durtur y Maen, which was the pseudonym of the Rev Lewis.

Crown awaits...

THIS year's Eisteddfod Crown has been donated by the Vale of Glamorgan Council and the financial prize presented by Islwyn and Ann Jones, Wenvoe. The Crown was designed and created by Anne Morgan of Penarth and was inspired by the landscape of the Vale of Glamorgan, with the rocks and cliffs of the area represented in the simple but bold design. It epitomises the designer's love for the region.

The GEM Souvenir Special

EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

Now Only Men Aloud inspire youngsters from the Vale

"When everyone is singing together, it'll be something Eisteddfod has never seen before"

ONLY MEN ALOUD – inspiring the Kids.

FRESH from their recent success with Only Boys Aloud on Britain's Got Talent, the members of Only Men Aloud are back at work mentoring and inspiring young children across the Vale of Glamorgan, as they prepare for the National Eisteddfod's visit to the area at the beginning of August.

Only Vale Kids Aloud, the latest in the family of choirs, will perform for the first time at the opening concert, sponsored by Principality, at this year's festival. Three members of the mentoring team took a break from rehearsals to tell us how the preparations are going and about their Eisteddfod experiences over the past few years.

"We're really looking forward to this year's Eisteddfod," says Craig Yates. "I think when everyone's singing together, it'll be something the Eisteddfod has never seen before – if we can fit everyone onto the stage! The kids are really looking forward to the concert and sharing the stage with Only Men Aloud – and especially with Only Boys Aloud!"

"Things are going well," adds Dan Phillips. "The response has been fantastic. First week rehearsals were all really positive and the kids have all started well."

So it bodes well for Only Vale Kids Aloud, and with the support and encouragement of Only Men Aloud members, it's obvious that the children are involved in a project which will inspire and stay with them for years to come, just as the preparations for the opening concert at the Blaenau Gwent and Heads of the Valleys Eisteddfod inspired another group of youngsters two years ago.

Only Boys Aloud were created for the opening concert at that year's Eisteddfod, and over the past two years, the 160-strong boys choir from across the south Wales Valleys has gone from strength-to-strength. Craig has special memories from that opening concert, "It was an amazing night. They reaction they had that night will live with me forever. We had started Only Boys Aloud less than three months earlier, and to be on stage with them, seeing the delight in the audience's reaction, and the massive self-belief in the boys, was something very special."

"Definitely," agrees David Mahoney. "It was an amazing reaction from the crowd, and an excitable and inspirational 160 teenage boys. We were all very proud of them."

And although Only Boys Aloud soon became household names across Wales, with a TV series following their progress, and opportunities for them to support Only Men Aloud in concert, it took a certain ITV-1 series to bring them to the attention of the whole of the UK and beyond!

"I was able to be in Britain's Got Talent for each round and the boys were amazing," says Dan.

"It was great to be part of it with them and see how they grew as a group throughout the competition, and how well behaved they all were."

"It was great," agrees David. "It was quite a journey. Impressing the judges and the UK as a whole to become Britain's biggest boy-band!"

"It was hard work," admits Craig. "But what the boys achieved was something very special indeed. And by sticking to their Welsh roots, they touched so many people around the world through what they did. Amazing."

As they prepared to return to mentoring the 300-strong Only Vale Kids Aloud choir, Craig tells us how he thinks the young members will benefit from their experience, which will stay with them forever and they'll make some great friendships along the way – "It'll broaden their horizons and help them to grow in ability and self-confidence".

...And with that, Craig, Dan and David rejoin the schoolchildren busily preparing for the opening concert on the Pavilion stage at the old airfield in Llandow on Friday, August 3 at 8pm.

MIRI'R MAES – *WOULDN'T TRADE IT FOR THE WORLD!*

THE National Eisteddfod is home to over 300 trade stands and stalls – and to a totally new and amazing shopping experience.

Wales' foremost festival is a shopper's Mecca – you'll find whatever you want, whatever you need – and a few treats you never realised you should have – by wandering through the colourful stalls dotted around the Eisteddfod Maes. It's a veritable cultural emporium.

You'll find all kinds of jewellery – most inspired by and made in Wales, paintings by up and coming artists, as well as some well known names.

There's a huge T-shirt culture at the Eisteddfod, with many companies developing and creating new designs just to sell during the week; and all the best new Welsh books and books about Wales are released in time for the stands at the Eisteddfod.

And with the Eisteddfod held from August 4-11, you'll have plenty of time to visit the stalls before deciding on your must have purchase!

But there's so much more on the Maes than the hundreds of trade stands... Use the Eisteddfod to find out more about Wales and what's going on across the country.

Wales' largest and most important organisations will all have stands at the Eisteddfod, with plenty of information about what they do – and how they do it.

So if you've wanted to know more about music, art, culture, tourism, business, politics – you name it – come down to the Eisteddfod Maes and have a look round...

The Pink Pavilion is the focal point for all the competing during the week, so whether you're into singing, brass bands, presentations or the splendour of the Gorsedd ceremonies, come to the Pavilion to watch some of Wales' brightest talents competing for the accolade of winning at the National Eisteddfod.

Scattered around the Pavilion are a host of satellite pavilions: A theatre, dance pavilion, literature pavilion, Visual Arts Exhibition, Science and Technology pavilion, Maes D – Learners Pavilion and the ever-popular performance stage, featuring local talent alongside some of the biggest names in the Welsh music scene.

Coupled with this, more relaxing activities such as face painting, storytelling, painting, quizzes, live music – and much more in stands and stalls across the Maes, you'll just have to come back to see everything you missed on your first visit!

Councillor Eric Hacker, Mayor of the Vale of Glamorgan, extends a warm welcome to all visitors to the Vale of Glamorgan and wishes the Eisteddfod a successful week.

Mae'r Cynghorydd Eric Hacker, Maer Bro Morgannwg, yn estyn croeso cynnes i bawb sy'n ymweld â Bro Morgannwg ac yn dymuno wythnos lwyddiannus i'r Eisteddfod.

JANE HUTT AM
Labour Assembly Member for the Vale of Glamorgan

Dymuniadau gorau i Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg
Best wishes to the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod
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Louise Clough a Beth Giles
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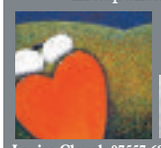

Ymgymerir a gwaith celf gwreiddiol a chomisiynau/ Original artwork and commissions undertaken

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The GEM Souvenir Special

EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

'So proud to have National Eisteddfod in our backyard'

AS a local resident, born and bred here in the Vale, it is a matter of great personal pride that the National Eisteddfod is coming to the Vale of Glamorgan this summer.

I can recall the first Eisteddfod that I attended back in the 1970s in Pentwyn, Cardiff, and it has remained one of the highlights of my calendar ever since. So the opportunity to attend the show in my own backyard will be an extremely exciting moment for me.

For a week, the Vale of Glamorgan will be the cultural capital of Wales, attracting as many as 150,000 visitors to the area and putting on display all that is special about the area – from the award-winning parks, pubs and restaurants, to the expansive coastline and beautiful beaches.

The whole region will be proudly on show!

The National Eisteddfod is in many ways the focal point of Welsh life each summer, and it remains as relevant, vital even, today as it was at the time of its revival in the 19th century; with the power to stimulate discussion and to tackle difficult issues, whilst serving as a celebration of Welsh culture.

With plenty of Welsh music, art and other original performances on show at the old Llandow airfield near Cowbridge, there is plenty for the whole family to enjoy throughout the week.

It is also important to point out that you don't need to speak Welsh to enjoy the experience – there will be free translation services on offer and there is always a warm welcome for all-comers!

I would like to pay tribute to the foundations put in place by the previous Vale Council in ensuring that the Eisteddfod could be hosted here, and, of course, to the incredible fundraising work done by the local community.

The preparations have been four years in the making and it is vital that local people and businesses benefit as much as possible from this wonderful opportunity.

Independent research has shown that the local economy can benefit by as much as £6-8 million by playing host to the National Eisteddfod.

The new Vale Council will be hosting the pavilion, welcoming visitors to the show, and I would like to join them, and local residents, in offering a warm welcome to visitors from across Wales.

I know that this will be a truly special, successful and memorable event.

ANDREW RT DAVIES
AM for South Wales Central

The Vale man who created the Gorsedd

ON THE TRAIL OF IOLO MORGANNWG

AS we look forward to an action-packed festival at the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod next week, S4C viewers can get to know the area and its people better in two special programmes produced by the team behind the Channel's arts series, Pethe.

In the documentary *Y Gwir yn erbyn y Byd?: Jim ar drywydd Iolo,* the current Archdruid of Wales, Jim Parc Nest, sets out on a mission to discover the truth about one of Welsh culture's most colourful characters, Iolo Morganwg, who was born in the area hosting this year's National Eisteddfod.

Iolo was born in 1747 in the village of Pennon in Llancarfan.

He was a stonemason by trade but is better known for his work as an antiquarian and poet and for being a romantic and fantasist who made up imaginative stories and created fake poets. It was Iolo who created the Gorsedd y Beirdd (Gorsedd of Bards) and ceremonies we still see today at the National Eisteddfod.

In the programme Jim asks why Iolo created the Gorsedd, "a magnificent lie... a legend which has come true."

On his journey he questions Welsh literary expert Professor Meic Stephens about Iolo's background. He discusses Iolo's adventures in London with journalist and broadcaster Huw Edwards as they travel on the London Eye, and Jim also visits Primrose Hill in the city where Iolo held the first ever Gorsedd of the Bards of Britain in 1792.

Back in Wales, Jim meets poet Karen Owen on the summit of Moel Famau to chat about Iolo's connections with the Vale of Clwyd, and his obvious prejudice against North Walian poets. He regarded them as barbarians, totally different to those he described as the sophisticated poets of Glamorgan!

Jim ends his journey on Bryn Owain, above this year's Eisteddfod field – the Maes – in the company of Professor Geraint Jenkins, who is regarded as one of our most eminent experts on Iolo Morganwg.

It was on this hill that the first ever meeting of the Gorsedd of Bards was held in Wales.

In another special edition of arts series Pethe on Wednesday night, we'll explore around the area hosting the 2012 Eisteddfod and meet some of its inhabitants.

Nia Roberts visits Islwyn Jones, who composed the poem of welcome – *cywydd croeso* – for the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod; and meets two talented brothers, Iolo and Donal Whelan, at their home in St Hilary.

Iolo is a highly-regarded percussionist who gives drumming lessons at the Vale Drum Studio. Donal is a music mastering engineer, and both brothers are members of the band Jamie Smith's Mabon.

The programme will also take a look at the Adain Avion project, a mobile art space created from the fuselage of a DC-9 aeroplane as part of the London Festival 2012.

Adain Avion has been travelling around Wales during the summer, working with local people along the way, to create performances, art works, workshops and events at each location on the journey, before landing on the Eisteddfod Maes at Llandow, which is particularly suitable as it used to be an airfield.

Each performance and event has been filmed and stored in the aeroplane's 'black box', and will be shown to the thousands of visitors who'll be coming to the Eisteddfod.

***Pethe**: Y Gwir yn erbyn y Byd?: Jim ar drywydd Iolo; Wednesday, August 1, 9.30pm, S4C.*

***Pethe**: Thursday, August 2, 9.30pm, S4C, (English subtitles).*

Welsh language technology festival to be held on the Maes

WORKING with Hacio'r Iaith and the People's Collection, the Eisteddfod will host the Welsh Technology Festival, a week of sessions likely to attract those interested in technology and the Welsh language, as well as those who are novices in the area.

The sessions will be a useful mix of workshops, drop-in sessions and more structured discussions. Eisteddfodwyr will be encouraged to blog about their experiences, use technology to practise and improve their Welsh, as well as plenty of opportunities to get some advice and help and try out different technologies during the week.

Euryn Ogwen Williams, this year's Honorary President and Chair of the local Literature Committee has been a pivotal part of the discussions from the start, and has also been an innovative figure in Welsh language technology for many years. He says, "With thousands of visitors every year, what better place can there be to discuss technology and the language than the Eisteddfod Maes?

"The Maes itself is a communications hub, and this new 'festival within the festival' is a chance for us to develop this element and provide many more people with the confidence and the necessary skills to use technology through the medium of Welsh.

"I am delighted with this partnership between the Eisteddfod and Hacio'r Iaith in particular, and I hope that many more people will be blogging and sharing their Eisteddfod experiences on the Maes itself and once they've gone home.

"As well as formal and informal sessions, there's a chance for people to call in to blog at the end of the day to voice their opinion on winners, or share their views on their day on the Maes. This new festival will be an asset to the Eisteddfod.

"The work undertaken by Hacio'r Iaith over the past few years is extremely important to the Welsh language and to new technology through the medium of Welsh,.

"I am pleased that we have created this partnership to reflect the important role Hacio'r Iaith, the People's Collection and the Eisteddfod itself has in the promotion of technology and the Welsh language."

Hacio'r Iaith's activities are sponsored by the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies at Aberystwyth University.

*They are held in Cefnlen, between Y Lle Celf and the Literary Pavilion. Cefnlen is sponsored by Imaginet of Cardiff, who have provided web services to the Eisteddfod for many years, and have been an integral part of the technical development of its online pres*ence.

'EISTEDDFOD DREAM IS NOW A REALITY'

I AM delighted to welcome the Welsh National Eisteddfod to the Vale of Glamorgan once again; it has been a long time since it last visited the Vale – when it came to Barry in 1968.

The Eisteddfod has come a long way since then, and is now the largest event in Wales and the second largest outside broadcast of the BBC in the UK.

It was January 2008 when I welcomed the Chief Executive of the Eisteddfod, as we set out to find a venue in the Vale to stage the 2012 event.

My mind was firmly set on bringing the Eisteddfod to the heart of the rural Vale at Llandow, and thanks to all the land owners and much work by the organisers, my dream has come true, when the Eisteddfod opens at Llandow on August 4.

Many people think that the Eisteddfod is just an event for Welsh speakers– don't you believe it!

The event brings together the whole of Wales to celebrate the art and culture of our nation.

There is something for everyone to enjoy at the Eisteddfod and I hope the residents throughout the Vale of Glamorgan, and south Wales, take the opportunity to join all those visitors from all over Wales to celebrate a wonderful week of events on our doorstep.

Over the past year, many fundraising events have been held to support the Eisteddfod coming to Llandow and my grateful thanks to everyone who has supported them.

We are now reaching the climax of all your efforts and I know the excitement is growing amongst all those who have contributed so much.

I wish everyone a very enjoyable week and I hope that bringing the Eisteddfod to Llandow will benefit all those businesses in the area and that our visitors will return in the future.

Let us welcome everyone and make their stay one to remember, Croeso i Bro Morgannwg!

COUN GWYN JOHN
Cabinet member for Leisure, Arts and Culture, Vale of Glamorgan Council

A very special Welsh phrase of the week!

THIS week's Welsh phrase of the week is most definitely one that catches the moment:

Croeso i Fro Morgannwg (Croi-so ee Vro Mor-ganoog) which means 'Welcome to the Vale of Glamorgan'.

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The GEM Souvenir Special

EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

Mystery of the replica chair...

WHEN R Bryn Williams stood on his feet in a packed Pavilion on Thursday afternoon at the Barry National Eisteddfod in 1968, little did he know that he would receive two chairs, as prizes for his success that year.

He received the Eisteddfod Chair during the ceremony, but he also received a small replica chair, and even today, the story behind this miniature version remains a mystery to the family.

His grandson, Gwydion Griffiths, says: "It would be very interesting to discover some of the replica chair's history. Why was it produced, and is my grandfather the only person to have received two chairs at the same Eisteddfod for the same award-winning work?

"The story has fascinated me for years, and with the Eisteddfod held in the Vale for the first time since 1968 this year, we are keen to find out more about the history of the little replica chair.

"My daughter loves the chair. The Eisteddfod Chair is in my uncle's house in north Wales, and I think it is lovely that two branches of the family are able to celebrate my grandfather's success."

The replica chair was in the care of R Bryn Williams' daughter, Nan Griffiths, for many years, and she still has the plaque presented to her father with the replica. She says: "It's obvious that the chair was a gift from the Forestry Commission, although I can't remember why he received such a gift.

"It is a perfect replica of the Eisteddfod Chair, and the model was created by Glyn Rees from Dinas Mawddwy, who, if I remember rightly, was well known for his oak furniture during this period. He also exhibited and sold his work at the Eisteddfod.

"We've spent the past few years trying to discover the history, so if anyone can help us, we'd be very grateful for information."

1968 was the second time R Bryn Williams had won the National Eisteddfod Chair. He won in 1964 for his poem, '*Patagonia*', a region which became synonymous with his name over the years.

Although known as a poet, writer and dramatist, his most famous works were his historical volumes, *Cymry Patagonia (*1942) and *Y Wladfa* (1962) – two books which did much to educate the people of Wales about Patagonia.

He was brought up in Patagonia after his parents emigrated when he was seven.

He remained there until the age of 21, when he returned to Wales to study at Bangor University and at the College of Divinity in Aberystwyth.

He was a minister with the Welsh Presbytarian Church for 20 years before joining the staff of the Celtic department at the National Library of Wales.

R Bryn Williams served as Archdruid from 1973-1976, a period which his grandson vaguely remembers, and says: "I remember seeing my grandfather on the Pavilion stage.

"I couldn't understand why he was dressed so grandly. And I remember starting to call out, 'Taid, Taid!' once.

"We were all very proud of him as Archdruid and as a double winner of the Eisteddfod Chair – as well as the winner who received a miniature chair as well.

"We'd love to find out the story behind this Chair and hope someone will be able to help."

If anyone has any information about the replica chair received by R Bryn Williams at the Eisteddfod in Barry in 1968, please send an email to: gwyb@eisteddfod.org.uk.

ABOVE: Two-year-old Miri Gruffudd and her father Gwydion Gruffyd, with the miniature chair presented to her great grandfather, R Bryn Williams, following his success in the 1968 Eisteddfod.

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Eisteddfod Genedlaethol 2012
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- Gwnewch 2012 yn flwyddyn i newid eich bywyd – dewch i ymuno â ni am goffi i gael rhagor o wybodaeth am astudio gyda'r Brifysgol Agored.
- Yn yr Eisteddfod Genedlaethol eleni, bydd y Brifysgol Agored yng Nghymru yn cynnig gweithgareddau sy'n gysylltiedig â rhaglen The Story of Wales.

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- At the National Eisteddfod this summer, The Open University in Wales is featuring activities related to The Story of Wales programme.

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The GEM Souvenir Special

EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

How to reach the Maes...

PUBLIC TRANSPORT: The Eisteddfod and the Vale of Glamorgan Council have worked together to ensure that there is access to the Maes via public transport.

A regular shuttle bus will meet trains at Llantwit Major train station and bring visitors to the Maes. There will also be a shuttle bus running from Cowbridge all day and until the end of the concerts in the evening. The bus will cost £2 each way.

To reach Cowbridge, you can catch a bus from Cardiff. The X2 bus travels from Cardiff to Bridgend, stopping at Cowbridge.

If you wish to catch the shuttle bus from Llantwit Major, there are trains that run through from Treherbert to Pontypridd, through Cardiff to Llantwit Major in the Vale. The first train departs from Cardiff at 07:41 and the last train leaves Llantwit Major at 21:56.

If you wish to reach the Maes by cycle, there are 400 spaces to leave cycles close to the Welcome Pavilion in the main entrance.

For full details on public transport options, go to www.traveline-cymru.info <http://www.traveline-cymru.info> or ring 0871 200 22 33.

TRAVELLING BY CAR:

From the west, traffic will be diverted off the M4, via junction 35 (Pencoed), and then via Ewenny and the coast road, approaching the west car park, and turning left into the car park.

This will serve traffic approaching from Swansea, Carmarthen, Aberystwyth etc.

From north Wales and the east, traffic will be diverted off the M4 via J33, A4232 to Culverhouse Cross, and then via Barry, St Athan and Llantwit Major.

Traffic will then enter the east car park via a left turn. This will serve traffic approaching from Cardiff, the Valleys and the east (and north Wales)

Caravans will be advised, via pre-arrival information, to follow the above route.

Disabled drivers should follow the signs for disabled parking, which will lead you to the east car park from all directions.

There is only one entrance to the Maes this year, and the disabled parking is as close as possible to this entrance.

Organisers urge all drivers to adhere to these instructions and to follow the signs for information.

A traffic management scheme has been agreed by the National Eisteddfod, Vale of Glamorgan Council and South Wales Police.

A temporary one-way system will be in place during the event, to manage traffic near the site and to allow visitors to walk safely between the Maes and the adjacent car parks and caravan park.

Due to the one-way system, access will be via the main entrance, but traffic leaving the industrial area will be required to exit via the northern access road.

A temporary 30mph speed limit will be in operation along the B4270, between the Llantwit Major bypass and Nash Corner.

This event is likely to attract a significant number of visitors. During morning and evening peak hours, there may be delays along the B4270 and adjoining roads as a consequence.

<u>NOTE</u>: Until Friday, July 27, the Vale Council's Highways and Engineering Unit will be attaching Eisteddfod bunting to street lighting columns on the High Street, Cowbridge, Llanmaes Road, Llantwit Major, Llantwit Major Railway Station, Llantwit Road, Wick and Ewenny Road, St Brides Major.

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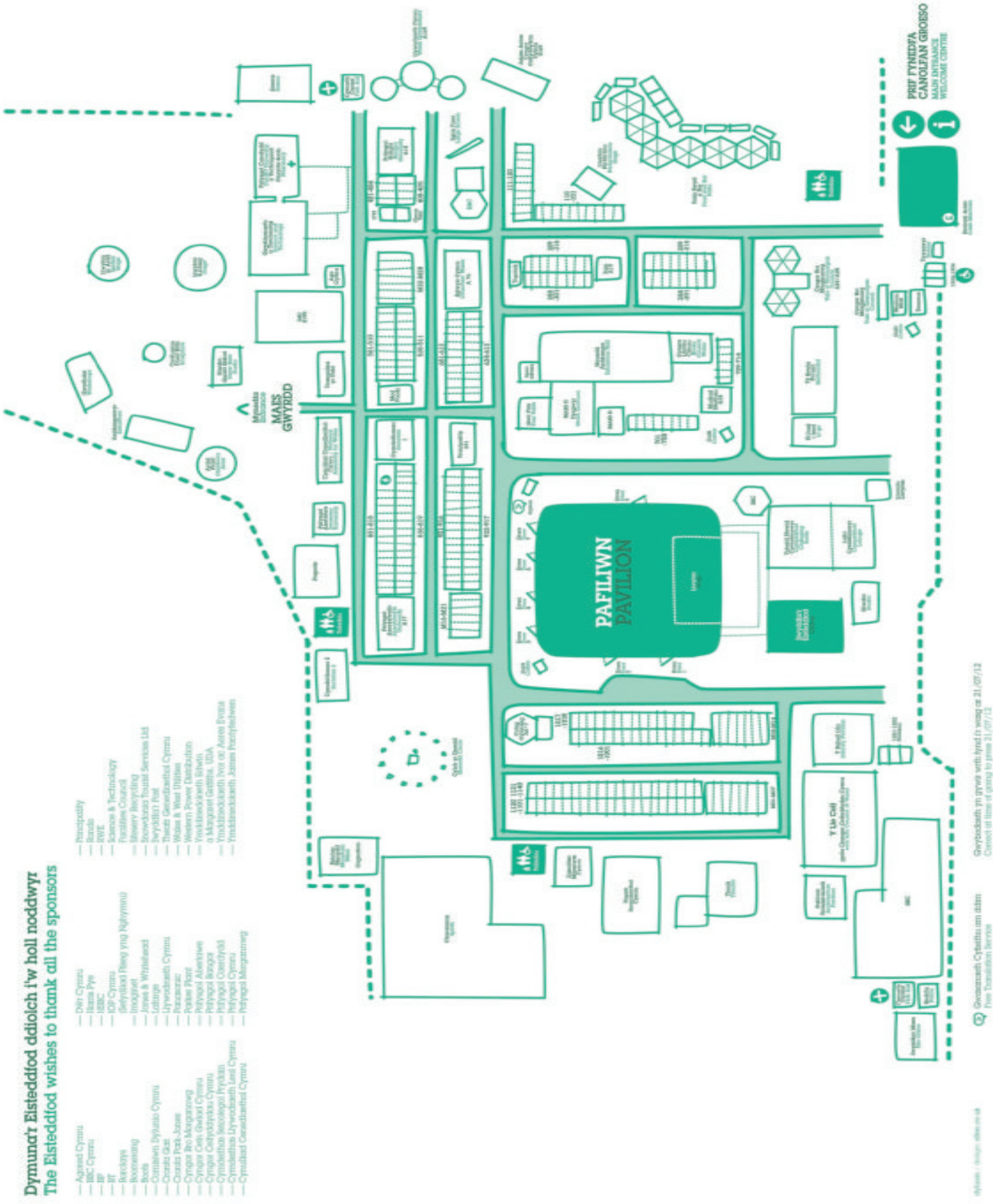

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2012 National Eisteddfod

Eisteddfod Genedlaethol
Bro Morgannwg
Vale of Glamorgan
National Eisteddfod

4-11 Awst / August 2012
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Holwch yn ein pabell neu ewch i'n gwefan **Ask at our pavilion or visit our website**

Come and visit the council's marquee on the Maes and check out our activity programme. If you're visiting the Vale, there's plenty to see if you would like to leave the Maes behind for a while...

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The GEM Souvenir Special

EISTEDDFOD GENEDLAETHOL BRO MORGANNWG
VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

ARLWY'R NOS/ EVENING ACTIVITIES

MAE digonedd i'w wneud ar Faes yr Eisteddfod o fore gwyn tan nos, ac eleni, am y tro cyntaf, mae gweithgareddau'r hwyr wedi'u canoli ar y Maes.

Mae'r Eisteddfod yn trefnu nifer o gyngherddau bob blwyddyn a chynhelir y rhain yn y Pafiliwn ar y Maes. Gellir prynu tocynnau ar gyfer y cyngherdddau naill ai drwy fynd i'r wefan: www.eisteddfod.org.uk, ffonio'r linell docynnau, 0845 4090 800, neu drwy fynd i'r swyddfa docynnau yn y brif fynedfa'n ystod yr wythnos ei hun. Mae'r cyngherddau i gyd yn cychwyn am 8o'gloch.

Nos Wener Awst 3, mae Only Men Aloud, Only Boys Aloud, Only Vale Kids Aloud ac Academi Only Boys Aloud y Principality yn agor yr Eisteddfod gyda chyngerdd arbennig, sy'n sicr o roi gwefr i unrhyw un yn y Pafiliwn. Noddir y noson gan Gymdeithas Adeiladu'r Principality.

Nos Sadwrn, cawn gyfle i fwynhau Premier Prydeinig gwaith diweddaraf y cyfansoddwr Karl Jenkins, Beirdd Cymru, gyda'r cyfansoddwr ei hun yn arwain, a Rebecca Evans, Dennis O'Neill a Chôr yr Eisteddfod. Bydd y cyngerdd hefyd yn cynnwys nifer o ffefrynnau clasurol, gan gynnwys Sadoc W'r Duw, Handel, Mae Hiraeth yn y Môr gan Dilys Elwyn Edwards a Nessun Dorma (Turandot) gan Puccini, gydag Alwyn Humphreys yn arwain. Noddir y noson gan Swyddfa'r Post.

Nos Sul bydd cyfle i fwynhau canu cynulleidfaol gyda Chymanfa'r Eisteddfod, dan arweinyddiaeth Euros Rhys Evans, a chyda Robert Nicholls ar yr organ. Cefnogir y noson gan Eglwys Annibynnol Gymraeg Radnor Walk, Chelsea, Llundain.

Bydd nos Lun yn noson a hanner wrth i Dafydd Iwan ddathlu hanner can mlynedd o ddiddanu cynulleidfaoedd ar hyd a lled Cymru. Dewch i fwynhau Degawdau Dafydd Iwan, pan fydd y dyn ei hun yn ymuno gyda rhai o'i hen gyfoedion a rhai o artistiaid ifanc disgleiriaf Cymru am noson o ddathlu ac edrych yn ôl dros yr hanner canrif ddiwethaf, fel rhan o weithgareddau Maes C. Noddir y noson gan Ymddiriedolaeth Ivor ac Aeres Evans.

Os mai chwerthin a mwynhau sy'n mynd â'ch bryd, byddwch wrth eich boddau yn y Pafiliwn nos Fawrth, pan gynhelir y Gala Gomedi Gymraeg fwyaf erioed. Dyma'r tro cyntaf i'r Eisteddfod fentro i fyd comedi, a chyda rhai o ddigrifwyr blaenaf Cymru, gan gynnwys Tudur Owen, Ifan Tregaron, Gary Slaymaker a Dewi Pws, yn ymddangos ar lwyfan y Pafiliwn, dyma noson sy'n mynd i aros yn y cof am amser maith. Noddir y noson gan Gronfa Gari, ac mae'n rhan o weithgareddau Maes C.

Bydd cyngherddau'r wythnos yn cloi nos Iau pan gawn orig yng nghwmni'r amryddawn Caryl Parry Jones – a gallwn gadarnhau y bydd rhai o'i chymeriadau enwocaf hefyd yn ymddangos yn y cyngerdd. Mae Caryl yn enwog fel darlledwraig, perfformwraig ac fel cerddor, felly dewch i fwynhau noson arbennig iawn yn y Pafiliwn nos Iau, fel rhan o weithgareddau Maes C.

Y Llwyfan Perfformio fydd lleoliad rhai o weithgareddau Maes B a Maes C eleni. Cynhelir Maes B yno ddechrau'r wythnos, cyn symud i lwyfan agored ar y Maes Ieuenctid o nos Fercher ymlaen, felly y Maes yw'r lle i ddod ar gyfer Brwydr y Bandiau nos Lun – er y bydd cyfle i'r band buddugol berfformio ar lwyfan Maes B yn y Maes Ieuenctid ar y nos Sadwrn olaf fel rhan o'r wobr.

Adeiladau amrywiol y Maes yw cartref nifer o weithgareddau Maes C eleni. Am nifer o flynyddoedd mae'r Maes wedi dod yn fwyfwy poblogaidd gyda'r nos gyda nifer fawr yn dewis aros yn y patio bwyd ymhell ar ôl i'r cystadlu orffen. Felly eleni, mae'r Eisteddfod wedi trefnu nifer o weithgareddau ar hyd a lled y Maes i fynd â'ch bryd.

Ddiwedd brynhawn Sul, dewch â'r plantos i'r Babell Lên i fwynhau Oli Odl, Dona Direidi a rhai o ffrindiau Cyw, S4C, cyn mynd draw at y Llwyfan Perfformio lle fydd Elin Fflur yn barod i ddiddanu'r teulu cyfan.

Ymysg y gweithgareddau Maes C eraill ar y Maes bydd y Stomp enwog nos Wener, a gynhelir yn y Babell Lên eleni, a noson gyda Steve Eaves a Lleuwen yn y Theatr, nos Iau am 9o'gloch. Mae rhestr llawn o'r gweithgareddau i gyd ar dudalennau eraill yr app hwn, felly treuliwch ychydig o amser yn pori drwy'r amserlenni, gan gynllunio'ch wythnos, ac yna dewch draw i Landw i fwynhau Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Bro Morgannwg. Chewch chi mo'ch siomi!

THERE'S plenty to do on the Eisteddfod Maes from morning till night, and this time, for the first time, most of the evening activities are located on the Maes itself.

The Eisteddfod organises a number of concerts every year, and these are held in the Pavilion on the Maes.

Tickets can be bought online, by ringing the ticketline: 0845 4090 800, or by going to the ticket office in the main entrance during the week itself. All the concerts start at 8pm.

On Friday August 3, Only Men Aloud, Only Boys Aloud, Only Vale Kids Aloud and The Principality Only Boys Aloud Academy open proceedings, with a special evening, which is sure to be a great success. The evening is sponsored by the Principality Building Society.

On Saturday evening, enjoy the UK premiere of Karl Jenkins' latest work, *Bards of Wales*, with the composer himself conducting Rebecca Evans, Dennis O'Neill and the Eisteddfod Choir.

The concert also includes a number of classical favourites, including 'Zadok the Priest' (Handel), 'Mae Hiraeth yn y Môr' (Dilys Elwyn Edwards) and 'Nessun Dorma' (*Turandot*) by Puccini, with Alwyn Humphreys conducting. The evening is sponsored by The Post Office.

On Sunday, come to the Pavilion to enjoy an evening of congregational singing, with the Eisteddfod Cymanfa, Euros Rhys Evans conducting and Robert Nicholls on the organ. The evening is supported by the Radnor Walk Welsh Congregational Church, Chelsea, London.

Monday evening will be a night to remember as Dafydd Iwan celebrates 50 years entertaining audiences across Wales and beyond. Come and enjoy Dafydd Iwan's Decades, when the man himself will be joined by a wide range of performers from throughout Dafydd's long career.

This evening is part of Maes C activities on the Maes, and is sponsored by the Ivor and Aeres Evans Trust.

If you enjoy comedy, the Pavilion is the place to be on Tuesday evening as the Eisteddfod hosts its first ever Comedy Gala – which is also the largest ever Welsh language comedy event.

Comedians including Tudur Owen, Ifan Tregaron, Gary Slaymaker and Dewi Pws will appear on the Pavilion stage, for an evening which is sure to entertain everyone.

The evening is sponsored by Cronfa Gary, and is part of Maes C's activities on the Maes. This evening is suitable for those over 14 years.

The Eisteddfod concert programme draws to a close on Thursday when we enjoy an evening with Caryl Parry Jones – and we can confirm that some of her most famous characters will also appear in this one-off show, created especially for this year's Eisteddfod.

Caryl is well-known as a broadcaster, performer and musician, and she'll be combining all three skills for a memorable evening, as part of the Maes C activities.

The Performance Stage plays host to some of the Maes B and Maes C activities this year. Maes C is held on the Maes at the start of the week before moving to an open stage in the Youth Village from the Wednesday evening onwards.

Come to the Maes to enjoy the Battle of the Bands competition on Monday evening, and the winning band will have a chance to perform on the open stage at the Youth Village on the Saturday evening as part of their prize.

Maes C is held at a number of the Eisteddfod's own pavilions on the Maes this year. For many years, the Maes has become increasingly popular in the evening, long after the competing has drawn to a close.

So this year, the Eisteddfod has organised a number of activities on the Maes to appeal to Eisteddfodwyr of all ages.

At the end of Sunday afternoon, bring your little ones to Y Babell Lên to enjoy Oli Odl, Dona Direidi and some of Cyw's friends, before going over to the Performance Stage to enjoy Elin Fflur, ready to entertain the whole family.

Amongst the other Maes C activities on the Maes are the famous Stomp on Friday evening, held in Y Babell Lên, and an evening with Steve Eaves and Lleuwen in the Theatre on Thursday at 9pm.

A full list of activities can be found on the website, so why not spend some time browsing through the list and planning your week at the Vale of Glamorgan National Eisteddfod? You won't be disappointed.

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"I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone visiting the National Eisteddfod in the Vale of Glamorgan this week. I know this will be an unforgettable event."

"Hoffwn estyn'n groeso cynnes i bawb sy'n ymweld ag Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru yn Bro Morgannwg wythnos yma. Rwy'n gwybod y bydd hwn yn ddigwyddiad bythgofiadwy."

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Dydd Sul	10yb-11.30yh	12-4.30yh & 5.30-8yh

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LOCAL FUNDRAISERS WITHIN REACH OF EISTEDDFOD TARGET

Eisteddfod organiser Hywel Wyn Edwards has heaped praise on the Vale Eisteddfod Committee for all their hard work fundraising for the festival over the past two years. (See below, right)

EISTEDDFOD WORKING WITH CERN ON PARTICLE EXHIBITION

THE main science and technology exhibition at this year's National Eisteddfod is entitled: '*Discovering Particles*' – an apt theme for the festival, given the recent exciting announcements in Geneva.

The Eisteddfod's exhibition has been put together in partnership with CERN and Swansea University's physics department.

The aim of the exhibition is to explain what scientists are trying to discover in Switzerland, and the role Welsh scientists have had in the process over the past few years. One of the main attractions will be a huge model of the particle accelerator in the centre of the Science Pavilion – but there's no need to worry as it's not a real accelerator, and the Maes is unlikely to be sucked into a huge black hole!

The Eisteddfod's science officer, Robyn Wheldon-Williams, said: "Many of us are aware of the groundbreaking experiments in Geneva, but few completely understand what scientists are trying to discover and the question they're trying to answer.

"It's an exciting time in Geneva at the moment, with this week's announcement that they've almost certainly discovered the missing particle, the Higgs Boson."

The Higgs Boson, sometimes referred to as the "God particle", lends mass to matter and holds the universe together. The discovery fills gaps in the theory that explains how particles, forces and interactions combine to shape the Universe.

The Eisteddfod has been working closely with CERN over the past few months, and is grateful to Dr Rhodri Jones for his work. He will present the main science lecture at this year's festival – '*The LHC – the world's most powerful accelerator*'.

It discusses the scientific and technical challenges faced in building the collider, and presents the latest results and what it means for us.

Elfed Roberts, Eisteddfod chief executive, added: "The Science and Technology Pavilion is one of the most popular places on the Maes, and the fact that organisations like CERN are supporting us, shows our ability to attract international standard exhibitions, working with partners around the world."

There will be a number of interactive activities in the Pavilion for people of all ages, from modelling collisions to seeing a real cosmic ray.

The National Eisteddfod is very grateful to the STFC (Science and Technology Facilities Council) for sponsoring the project.

A wide range of other activities are taking place in the Science and Technology Pavilion during the week, including events organised by Panasonic, promoting the fuel cell in the home, outlining the co-operation between Japan and Wales, and the company's latest inventions.

This part of the exhibition also includes the history of Welshman, Sir William Grove, the father of the fuel cell, and his experiments.

Wales & West Utilities will host an exhibition to highlight their campaign on the dangers of carbon dioxide gas, and leaflets promoting the campaign will be distributed to everyone staying on the caravan site and in the youth village, outlining the dangers of this deadly gas.

Lafarge, owners of the cement works in Aberthaw, who celebrate their 100th anniversary this year, will run events about the cement industry and will host a 3D cinema during the week.

A full list of Science and Technology activities at this year's Eisteddfod is available on the website: www.eisteddfod.org.uk.

A big thanks!

AN important part of the visit of any Eisteddfod is the work of the local appeal committees – raising money and awareness of the Eisteddfod.

It's wonderful to be able to confirm that they are within touching distance of reaching the challenging target of £300,000 the Vale was given. With activities still to be held, the committee is confident that this figure will be met.

Eisteddfod organiser, Hywel Wyn Edwards, said: "It's difficult to believe that the Eisteddfod is almost upon us again this year. Two years of work in the Vale of Glamorgan is about to reach its climax.

"The welcome we've received from local people and from the team of volunteers has been wonderful, and the work they've done raising awareness and funds is excellent.

"With days to go, I think it's timely that we pay tribute to them all for their work, their commitment, and most of all for their enthusiasm during a difficult economic period.

"We are extremely grateful for everything you've achieved over the past two years.

"Diolch yn fawr!"

Artistic view

VALE of Glamorgan Artists (*www.voga.org.uk*) will be displaying their artistic interpretations of Welsh poet Menna Elfyn's 'The Burning Multitude' at the Eisteddfod, from August 4-11 (stand number N14 in the Exhibition Hall, Neuadd Arddangos).

The works can then be seen at the Travellers' Gallery, run by Mind in the Vale, from Monday August 14-Friday September 6, mornings only, 7.30am-12.30pm.

More of VoGA's work may also be seen in the Barry Arts Festival, Windsor Road Church, Barry, July27-August 5, 10am-4pm (free admission).

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O'NEILL TO PERFORM BRITISH PREMIER OF WORK

One of the greatest activities the Eisteddfod brings to any area is the formation of the Eisteddfod Choir, with an opportunity to perform in front of over 2,000 people in the Eisteddfod pavilion with a full concert orchestra and world class soloists.

This year's Eisteddfod Choir concert promises to be a night to remember as during the second half of the concert they will perform the British Premiere of Karl Jenkins' new work : The Bards of Wales with soloists Dennis O'Neill and Rebecca Evans and Karl Jenkins himself conducting the work.

His latest work 'The Bards of Wales' was premiered in Hungary in June 2011. The piece forges an unexpected link between Hungary and Wales : The Hungarian poet János Arany (1817-82) was asked to write a poem in praise of the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph but, as the Austrian overlords had just suppressed the 1848 Hungarian Revolution, the poet did the opposite. To satisfy the state censor, the poem was written in terms of Welsh history rather than Hungarian, telling how Edward I of England executed Welsh bards for failing to sing his praises at a banquet in Montgomery Castle in 1277.

The British premier of the work at the Eisteddfod will feature the Welsh language version of the work by poet Twm Morys.

Performing on the night will be the renowned tenor, Dennis O'Neill and we caught up with him as he prepares for his appearance at the Eisteddfod. "I am looking forward to appearing at the Eisteddfod" He said. "Karl Jenkins and I were schoolboys together at Gowerton Grammar School and played in the orchestra together. As you would expect from Karl, the Bards of Wales in an original and exciting score. It's interesting too that the Hungarian text is apparently known to every schoolchild in that country, making an amazing link with Wales".

Dennis also has fond memories at performing at the last Eisteddfod to be held in the Vale, when the Eisteddfod visited Barry in 1968. He competed, and was successful in the 18 – 25 age group tenor competion. "Winning this competition ended my competitive stage and began my ambition to become a professional singer"

Although the highlight of the concert will be the British premier of the Bards of Wales the first half will feature popular classics carefully chosen by the Choir and soloists. Dennis explained "For the first half of the concert I have decided to stick to the pieces that I have sung for many years and represent the most popular aspect of my work – 'Arafa Don' is definately the most popular Welsh song for tenor and 'Nessun Dorma' is the most popular aria for an Italianate tenor. I have chosen the repertoire that has taken me around the world".

It's been a busy year for the singer with most of the year taken with etablishing the Wales International Academy of Voice with the University of Wales of which he is Director and immediately after the Eisteddfod he will leave for masterclasses and recitals in Australia and New Zealand.

Before that however he will once again take to the stage in the 2,000 seater Eisteddfod Pavillion. Tickets are currently for sale and priced at £19 – £28 from the Eisteddfod ticket Office : 0845 40 90 400 or www.eisteddfod.org.uk.

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ONLY VALE KIDS ALOUD PREPARE FOR EISTEDDFOD

THREE hundred young voices from the Vale of Glamorgan will unite for the National Eisteddfod Opening Concert in Llandow this August. In a special documentary on S4C, we'll see how the ambitious project was brought together under the watchful eye of master conductor Tim Rhys-Evans.

Wyn Davies will join Tim and members of Only Men Aloud as they prepare the young singers in schools across the county. S4C viewers will also be given front-row seats as the young choir take their bow on the National Eisteddfod stage in their first public performance, alongside Tim's other choirs, Only Men Aloud and Only Boys Aloud.

Only Kids Aloud o'r Fro is to be broadcast on Thursday, 2 August with the Eisteddfod's Opening Concert live the following evening (Friday, 3 August).

"We wanted to create a choir of local schoolchildren for this year's opening ceremony that would give them a chance to experience the thrill of performing on a world-class stage in their local area," explains Tim Rhys-Evans. "There's no grander stage in Wales than that of the National Eisteddfod. Earlier this year, we issued a rallying call to youngsters in the Vale of Glamorgan and the response has been phenomenal with over 300 children now taking part in this project."

A large number of the performers come from English-speaking homes. This project aims to raise the awareness of the Welsh language as well as traditional choral singing.

"The National Eisteddfod has a strong tradition of nurturing and developing performers. Both Only Men Aloud and Only Boys Aloud have performed on the Pavilion stage and we're all excited to be returning when the Eisteddfod arrives in the Vale of Glamorgan."

Maes D – centre for learning Welsh

IF you're learning Welsh, or thinking about learning, there will be a warm welcome for you at Maes D, the learners' pavilion.

A variety of activities suitable for learners will be held throughout the week, including zumba in Welsh, daily workshops run by Cardiff and Vale College, musical performances, learn the national anthem with Courtenay Hamilton and much more.

Activities for children and families will also be held at Maes D. Why not come and see one of Kariad the Clown's performances, take part in a circus workshop or enjoy a storytelling session with Peppa Pinc organised by Rily book publishers. The singer Wynne Evans will officially open Maes D at 10.30am on Saturday, August 4.

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Welsh for Adults Centre will hold daily Welsh language taster sessions at Maes D for beginners.

The Eisteddfod is the perfect time to start learning Welsh as there are so many opportunities to practice! You can also pick up information at Maes D about learning Welsh in your local area.

Of course, there are people learning Welsh all over the world and we will celebrate this on Tuesday, August 7. During the day there will be presentations on the online provision for learners and how social groups outside of Wales can be set up and maintained. You can also enjoy a Japanese tea ceremony, tango dancing and take part in a Skype conversation with learners from across the world.

If you haven't been to the Eisteddfod before, why not come to the 'Your first visit to the Eisteddfod? Where to go, what to see?' session on the first Saturday or Monday, August 6.

Translation equipment will be provided at both these sessions. To find out the times and dates of all the activities at Maes D, visit: www.eisteddfod.org.uk, and look under Eisteddfod 2012, 'Maes activities'.

The highlight of the week for learners will be to find out who has been crowned Welsh Learner of the Year 2012 on Wednesday August 8.

Tickets for the evening, held at the Bear Hotel, Cowbridge, will be for sale at: www.eisteddfod.org.uk until August 1. Come and hear more about the four finalists, enjoy light entertainment and a delicious three course meal.

We look forward to welcoming you at Maes D!

Creating the chair

ABOVE: This year's Eisteddfod chair was crafted by Andrew Lane, with the inscription by Rupert King.

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Dafydd Iwan's decades

THIS year's Eisteddfod is a milestone for one of Wales' most famous performers, as the evergreen Dafydd Iwan celebrates half a century of entertaining audiences across the whole of Wales – and beyond.

It's certain that Eisteddfodwyr of all ages will want to share this occasion with one of Wales' best-loved entertainers, and enjoy a special show as part of this year's Maes C activities, Dafydd Iwan's Decades – the highlight of this year's celebrations.

We caught up with Dafydd himself to look back over the decades and look forward to a special evening in the Pavilion in less than a month.

He said: "The evening is an opportunity to look back at 50 years of performing, with old friends and young artists, and I'm sure there'll be a few smiles and a few tears along the way during the show, but the aim is to create an evening to remember.

"Song wise, there may be a new twist on some old favourites, and I'm delighted that I'll be joined by Ar Log, Heather Jones a'i Ffrindiau, Hefin Elis, Miriam and Greta Isaac, Adran Heol-y-March, the faithful old band, and Edward himself, on stage. It'll be Gwyn Llewelyn's job to try and keep us all under control!"

Half a century has passed since Dafydd picked up his guitar and started performing at a concert in Fishguard High School in the summer of 1962, and since then, his catchy songs have grasped the imagination of the people of Wales

He says: "Every song has some kind of story or message, or what's the point? In the 1960s, lots of Wales' young people had very clear aspirations, and it's natural that songs from the period reflect this. We weren't preaching, or even protesting really, we were merely expressing our feelings and putting our hopes of living our lives fully through Welsh and living freely as Welsh people, into words."

ABOVE: Dafydd Iwan's Decades will look back over the 50 years he has been performing at the National Eisteddfod.

And the Eisteddfod was an integral part of this urge to live their lives through Welsh from the beginning of Dafydd's career, and he has many happy memories of attending the festival, both as an entertainer and as a performer – he has performed at every Eisteddfod since 1967!

"I remember cycling all the way from Llanuwchllyn to Plaid Cymru's summer school in Llangefni in 1957 on my brand new racing bike, and then on to the Eisteddfod," he continued. "Two years later, when the Eisteddfod came to Caernarfon in 1959, my brother Arthur and I shared a tent on land at Gwernafalau Farm in Llandwrog. Little did I realise at the time that Sain would open its first studio on that very farm 15 years later.

"I have very fond memories of the three Eisteddfodau in Bala – '67, '97 and 2009, a one-man show in Theatr y Gegin in Cricieth in 1975, the fierce protests in Flint in 1969, the mud and the rain in Fishguard in '86, and the 'Peintio'r Byd yn Wyrdd' (Painting the world green) show in Llandybie, during the Ammanford Eisteddfod in 1970.

This year he's appearing in Maes D at 4.30pm on Thursday, and he's then part of the Maes C activities on the Maes on Saturday at 6.30pm on the Performance Stage.

Dafydd Iwan's Decades is held on August 6 at the Eisteddfod Pavilion. Tickets are available online: www.eisteddfod.org.uk, or by calling 0845 4090 800.

The Stockton family gear up for busy week!

ABOVE: Macsen, Lleucu and Caleb Stockton from Penarth.

ONE local family in particular is gearing up for a busy Eisteddfod week!

The Stockton family from Penarth has been eagerly awaiting the start, since daughter Lleucu (7), a pupil at Ysgol Pen y Garth, Penarth was selected to be one of the flower dancers who will perform at the Crowning and Chairing ceremonies on Monday and Friday of Eisteddfod week.

Lleucu will also be performing with the school choir during the Daniel Owen ceremony on Tuesday and will also be taking part in a poetry reading with local poet, Caryl Parry Jones, in the literature pavilion on Sunday.

Lleucu said: " After over a year of rehearsing for the flower dance, I'm really excited at the prospect of performing it in the main pavilion.

"My parents, brothers, grandparents and cousins, will all be in the audience to support me – and I can't wait!

"I'm also looking forward to exploring the 'Maes' and top of my list will be the 'Flash Bang show' and circus workshops in the Science Pavilion, drama workshops in the Theatre Cafe, craft activities around the Maes and, if I get time, I'm looking forward to seeing Elin Fflur perform".

Brother Macsen (7), meanwhile will take to the Literature pavilion stage on Saturday, to perform with other local schoolchildren in a special concert organised by Menter y Fro.

Among Macsen's festival highlights will be the numerous activities for children in the Science Pavilion, and the chance to get to meet some of his favourite television characters.

Mother Mared has been a pivotal member of the Penarth Appeal Committee who in the space of 18 months have raised thousands of pounds in the town.

Successful events have included a vintage garden party, showing of the film *Twin Town*, concert with Max Boyce, Frock swap.

No doubt the family will be looking forward to a well-deserved rest at the end of the week!

'Best of Barry' welcome for the Eisteddfod

A SELL-OUT crowd of more than 300 enjoyed a memorable night in Barry Memorial Hall last Friday, when 'The Best of Barry' took to the stage as the last fundraiser in Barry to raise money for the National Eisteddfod, which starts in Llandow in a week's time.

CONNIE FISHER

The evening was presented by Connie Fisher, who has just finished a six-month tour of the musical *Wonderful Town*.

Connie is a National Eisteddfod winner herself, and she was more than happy to take the evening off from filming duties on *Casualty* to host the event.

Johnny Tudor, who played Marco in Gavin & Stacey, co-hosted and dazzled on stage as he entertained the audience in his own unique way by singing, dancing and storytelling.

Both Connie and Johnny have learnt Welsh themselves and they were keen to encourage others who do not speak Welsh, to attend the Eisteddfod.

As Connie said: "*Don't think that the Eisteddfod is boring and for people who wear Welsh costumes and eat leeks*!"

Also present was Melanie Walters, or 'Gwen' from Gavin and Stacey. Melanie helped out with the auction and raffle, which were supported by local businesses and wellwishers, and the organisers are very grateful for their generosity.

The Vale of Glamorgan Brass Band were in fine form as they kicked off the proceedings with 'Men of Harlech', and it was fitting that Barry Choral Society – which was established for the National Eisteddfod of 1968 – was part of the guest line-up, as well.

Local home-grown talent were Barry-born and bred singers – Aled Sion Williams, Beth Zienna Williams, Ifan Gwilym Jones and Lisa Davies. They all gave some impressive performances and are certainly names to look out for in the future.

The Y Dance Crews from the YMCA displayed some fabulous street dancing and Superstars in the Making displayed some great musical theatre.

As it was the last day of term, it was surprising that the youngsters in these line-ups had any energy left!

Euros Rhys was the accompanist for the evening and he has had a busy 12 months co-directing the Eisteddfod Choir. But you will hear a lot about him during the Eisteddfod week as he is the guest conductor for the Gymanfa Ganu on Sunday, August 5.

The organisers are hoping that the people of Barry will go over to Llandow in August and see for themselves that the Eisteddfod is truly an event which welcomes everybody.

And if you are worried about not speaking the language – be sure to ask for the translation service.

The Eisteddfod is a celebration of Welsh culture and heritage and we are sure that everybody in the town will give the people of Wales a warm 'Best of Barry' welcome in August.

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Maes B will create a 'great atmosphere'

YR ODS sy'n arwain lein-yp nos Sadwrn Maes B eleni, gan gloi pedair noson o gigs a fydd yn wahanol iawn i'r arfer yn Eisteddfod Bro Morgannwg ym mis Awst.

Yn ôl y Trefnydd, Guto Brychan: "Eleni, bydd Maes B yn cael ei gynnal ar lwyfan agored yn y maes ieuenctid, gan ychwanegu at yr ymdeimlad o w'yl i greu awyrgylch arbennig.

"Mae'r ymateb i'r syniad hwn wedi bod yn arbennig o bositif, a llawer o sôn ar wefannau fel Twitter dros y misoedd diwethaf, ers cyhoeddi'r syniad gwreiddiol.

"Rydan ni wedi bod yn awyddus i arbrofi gyda llwyfan agored ers peth amser, ac mae lleoliad yr Eisteddfod eleni'n gweddu'n berffaith i hyn, felly, o nos Fercher ymlaen, bydd Maes B yn digwydd ar y maes ieuenctid, sy'n agos iawn at Faes yr Eisteddfod ei hun. Bydd dim angen i wersyllwyr orfod meddwl am ddal bws neu gyrraedd yn ôl i'r maes ieuenctid ar ddiwedd y nos."

Bydd Maes B ar y maes ieuenctid yn cychwyn nos Fercher gyda Meic Stevens, Elin Fflur, Al Lewis Band, Tom ap Dan a Greta Isaac, ac yna nos Iau, bydd Cowbois Rhos Botwnnog, Y Niwl, Sen Segur, Violas ac Eilir Pierce yn ymddangos.

Y Bandana, Masters in France, Swnami, Helyntion Jos y Ficar a Nebula, enillwyr Brwydr y Bandiau C2 Radio Cymru a Mentrau Iaith Cymru, sy'n chwarae nos Wener, ac Yr Ods, Creision Hud, Yr Angen, Candelas ac enillwyr cystadleuaeth Brwydr y Bandiau Maes B fydd yn cloi'r wythnos ym Maes B.

"Rwy'n meddwl ein bod ni wedi llwyddo i sicrhau lein-yp arddderchog ar gyfer Maes B eleni, gydag amrywiaeth eang o grwpiau a genres, a fydd yn sicr o apelio at gynulleidfa leol a chenedlaethol sy'n dod draw i Fro Morgannwg.

"Bydd gigs Maes B, gan gynnwys cystadleuaeth Brwydr y Bandiau, ddechrau'r wythnos yn cael eu cynnal ar y llwyfan perfformio ar Faes yr Eisteddfod ei hun.

"Mae hyn yn rhan o strategaeth yr Eisteddfod i ganoli nifer o weithgareddau, gan gynnwys Maes C ar y Maes ei hun eleni, ac mae'n ffordd arbennig o sicrhau bod cwmpas llawer mwy eang o bobl yn cael cyfle i fwynhau rhai o fandiau newydd Cymru ddechrau'r wythnos.

"O ran cystadleuaeth Brwydr y Bandiau, rwy'n meddwl bod cael y cyfle i chwarae ar y llwyfan perfformio yn ogystal ag ym Maes B ei hun yn gyfle arbennig i unrhyw fand."

Gellir prynu tocynnau arlein yn: www.eisteddfod.org.uk, neu drwy ffonio'r Llinell Docynnau – 0845 4090 800. Am ragor o wybodaeth am Maes B, ewch i www.maesb.com neu www.facebook.com/maesb. Gallwch ddilyn Maes B ar Twitter – www.twitter.com/maes_b.

Yr Ods lead the Saturday line-up.

YR ODS lead the Saturday night line-up at this year's Maes B, completing four evenings of gigs, which will be very different to previous years at the National Eisteddfod in the Vale of Glamorgan.

According to organiser, Guto Brychan:

"This year's Maes B will be held on an open stage in the youth village, adding to the festival vibe and creating a great atmosphere.

"The response to this idea has been extremely positive, especially on social media such as Twitter, since the original idea was first announced late last year.

"We've wanted to experiment with an open stage for a while, and this year's location is perfect; so from Wednesday evening onwards, Maes B takes place in the youth village, close to the Eisteddfod Maes itself.

"This means that people won't have to worry about catching a bus or getting back to the campsite at the end of the night."

Maes B at the youth village starts on Wednesday night with Meic Stevens, Elin Fflur, Al Lewis Band, Tom ap Dan and Greta Isaac, and on Thursday night, Cowbois Rhos Botwnnog, Y Niwl, Sen Segur, Violas and Eilir Pierce will perform.

Y Bandana, Masters in France, Swnami, Helyntion Jos y Ficar and Nebula, winners of the C2 Radio Cymru and Mentrau Iaith Cymru Battle of the Bands, are the line-up on Friday, with Yr Ods, Creision Hud, Yr Angen, Candelas and winners of the Maes B Battle of the Bands competition performing on Saturday night at Maes B.

Guto Brychan added: "I think we've managed to put together a strong line-up this year, with a wide range of groups and genres coming together, to create a festival which is sure to appeal to a local and national audience, coming to the Vale of Glamorgan.

"Maes B gigs at the beginning of the week, including the Battle of the Bands competition, will be held on the performance stage on the Eisteddfod Maes itself.

"This is part of the Eisteddfod's strategy to centralise a number of activities, including Maes C, on the Maes itself this year, and it's a great way to ensure that as many people as possible have the chance to enjoy some of Wales' newest bands early in the week.

"I think it's good for the Battle of the Bands competition, as the bands will be able to perform live on the performance stage as well as playing in Maes B – a fantastic opportunity for any band."

Tickets are available online at: www.eisteddfod.org.uk, or by ringing the ticket-line – 0845 4090 800. For more information on Maes B, go to: www.maesb.com or www.facebook.com/maesb. You can also follow Maes B on Twitter – www.twitter.com/maes_b.

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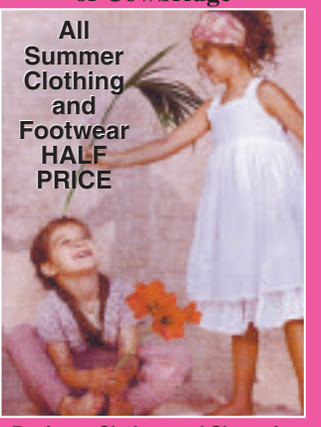

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ARRIVAL OF WELSH NATIONAL FESTIVAL IS A TIMELY ECONOMIC BOOST TO TRADERS IN THE VALE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

Janet continued: "We are all really looking forward to welcoming visitors, and we hope that they will enjoy spending time in the town, and come back soon!

"Llantwit Major RFC is hosting the Welsh Language Society's camp site, and there will also be live music, featuring the best Welsh language bands, every evening in the rugby club."

The Llantwit Major History Society is also doing its bit to welcome visitors to the town. Members will be on hand throughout the Eisteddfod period, offering information and advice about the history of the area.

They will be in the Heritage Centre, which is part of the town hall, from August 4 until August 11.

The potential economic benefits of around 160,000 visitors to the Vale have been appreciated by the Vale Council, too.

The council's website offers visitors advice on where to stay, and where to visit, and the council will have a strong presence on the Maes throughout the festival.

An Eisteddfod spokeswoman told The GEM: "A significant percentage of the economic benefit to the local area during the Eisteddfod goes to the tourism and hospitality sector, with people staying in hotels and guest houses, eating out, and enjoying local amenities during their visit to the area.

"Around 600 caravans and 100 tents will be placed on the official caravan site next to the Eisteddfod Maes itself, and many more people will be looking for spaces at other local caravan parks during the week.

"Thousands more will also be searching for hotels, bed and breakfasts, guest houses, private houses and so on, providing ample opportunities for the hospitality sector in the region, as many people will book their accommodation well in advance."

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Crash course in Welsh for local businesses

BUSINESSES in the Vale are invited to attend a free Welsh taster session during the next week, as part of preparations to welcome Eisteddfod visitors to the county.

The aim of the session is to help staff learn basic phrases to greet visitors in Welsh, and the first session is tonight (Thursday, July 26) 5.30pm–6.30pm at the Bear Hotel, in Cowbridge.

The second session will be on Tuesday, July 31 (4.30pm–5.30pm) at the Llantwit Major Rugby Club.

For more details, email gwennol@eisteddfod.org.uk or call 0845 4090 300.

An Eisteddfod spokeswoman added: "If you're attending the Eisteddfod and interested in learning Welsh, remember to drop in at Maes D, the learners' pavilion.

"Taster sessions for complete beginners will be held daily at Maes D, and everyone is welcome. Look under 'Maes activities' on the Eisteddfod's website for the time of each session."

Vale Council puts fun into the Eisteddfod

THE stage is set and final preparations are well under way for the National Eisteddfod 2012.

For this year's Eisteddfod, which will be held in Llandow from August 4-11, the Vale Council has organised a daily programme of fun activities for visitors of all ages.

Activities include a surf simulator challenge, willow weaving and puppet workshops, paintball target challenge, play activities, balloon modelling, face painting and Nordic walking.

Cookery tutorials, showing visitors how to make traditional Welsh treats such as Glamorgan sausages, laverbread and Welsh cakes, will also be held by BBC Wales presenter Sian Bassett Roberts.

Daily film and music workshops will be held by the Vale Youth Team on the multi-media VPod bus.

The Vale's sports and play development team will be overseeing activities in the sports arena, including taster sessions in rugby, football, cricket, badminton, tri-golf, athletics, multisport games and dodgeball.

Many of these sessions will be delivered by experienced coaches from the team's 5x60, Disability Sport and Dragon Sport programmes.

There will be also be coaches from a variety of organisations delivering coaching sessions daily throughout the week, with players from Cardiff Blues and Glamorgan Cricket will also host training sessions.

The Vale's Play Aloud team will be inviting visitors to help them build a cardboard city.

A mobile forest school will also be on site, with activities – including building a log circle, scavenger hunts and treasure hunts.

As part of a revival of the Barry Summer School, artist Ivor Davies will give a presentation about the pioneering summer school during the 1960s at 3pm on Thursday, August 9.

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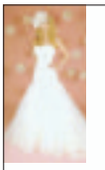

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VALE OF GLAMORGAN NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD

Community fundraisers are vital part of the Eisteddfod

THROUGHOUT the area, fundraising groups have been organising events to raise money to help with the cost of bringing the Eisteddfod to the Vale.

Sian Elin Jones, of the Welsh St Donat's group, told The GEM that local businesses had offered great support.

She said: "That definitely helped us to reach our target. We started a year ago last March, with a rugby forum in the Bear Hotel, with Jonathan Davies and Simon Easterby."

That event was a great success and it meant that the fundraising drive was off to a flying start.

Earlier this year, the group organised a Sant Dwynwen evening at Cowbridge restaurant Arboreal. Sant Dwynwen is the Welsh equivalent to St Valentine, although his saint's day is celebrated on January 25.

The group finished off their events at the end of June, with an antiques quiz, once more in the Bear, with questions from Philip Havard of Havard and Havard.

Sian Elin Jones said: "This event was organised with the Cowbridge fundraising group."

Elsewhere, there has been a huge variety of events, all aimed at helping the Eisteddfod thrive.

Cast members of *Pobol y Cwm* staged a concert in 'All Saints' Church Hall, Penarth, while the Vale Resort staged the 'Llandow Open' golf day.

Eisteddfod supporters were busy in Penarth, putting on a concert with Cantemus in St Augustine's Church; while Hamptons restaurant staged 'What's New Pussycat?' – a Tom Jones evening, complete with a five-course meal.

On a completely different tack, cast members of the cult film *Twin Town* attended a screening in the Paget Rooms, and then took part in a Q & A session.

In Barry, a cabaret at the Memorial Hall was hosted by Connie Fisher, with guests Johnny Tudor and Melanie Walters (Stacey's mum in *Gavin and Stacey*).

There is, in fact, at least one fundraising event to go, because on August 3, Bridgend Male Choir (National Eisteddfod winners in 2004 and 2006) will perform at St. Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major, at 7.30 pm.

Tickets are available from Graham Morgan on 01446 790132 or 07948 485325.

Ros Lewis, of the Llantwit Major fundraisers, ran through just some of the events (more than 40) they had organised.

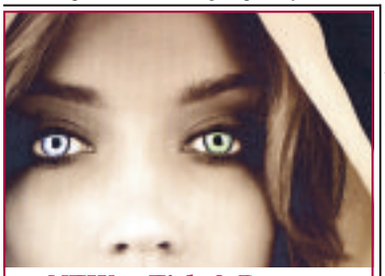
She said: "Graham Morgan, landlord of the Old White Hart, ran a 'Haggis and Hearts' dinner, and Quest Hair Salon staff organised a curry night at the Jaipur Indian Restaurant.

"We held a Race Night at the Kings Cup pub in St Athan, and the St Athan members of the group organised a St David's Day Dinner at the Blue Anchor.

"We organised a murder mystery evening, in conjunction with the Welsh learner officer, at Illtuds 216 restaurant, a 'Taste of Wales' dinner at the West House Hotel, Llantwit Major, and a ghost story evening at the Boverton Castle."

The aforementioned are by no means the only ones who have worked to help the Eisteddfod, and the sheer number who gave their time is a real testament to the affection that people have for this celebration of Welsh culture and *tradition.*

The Eisteddfod may have to deal with a certain rival attraction in London this year, but for so many proud Welsh men and women – it's simply no contest!



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LONG SERVING STAFF RETIRE AT SCHOOL

FOUR teachers with a combined service record of 126 years at Holton Primary School, retired at the end of the summer term.

They were: Mrs H O'Sullivan, Mrs S Thomas, Mrs C Evans and Mrs P Lloyd.

"They have given the school many years of loyal service and many, many children could not have asked to be placed in better caring hands than theirs," said headteacher Mr A Gilbert.

"On behalf of everyone at the school now, and all those who have known them, I should like to thank them for their commitment to the school and wish them a long and happy retirement," he added.

ABOVE: The retiring colleagues with Mr Gilbert.

IN BRIEF: *Plaid coffee*

THE latest free coffee morning with Dinas Powys Plaid councillors will be held this Saturday, July 28 (11am-12noon) in the Lee Hall, Britway Road.

Contact Coun Chris Franks on 07725497423.

Joint worship

THE parish of Llansantffraid, Bettws and Aberkenfig will be holding a joint worship service in Llansantfraid Church on Sunday, July 29 at 10am; all welcome.

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL
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Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995

Development that may affect a Conservation Area / Datblygu a allai effeithio ar Ardal Gadwraeth

Application No:/ Rhif y cais: 2012/00693/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: New three storey dwelling built over existing outdoor pool
Location:/Lleoliad: 10, Park Road, Penarth
Conservation Area:/ Ardal Gadwraeth Penarth

Affecting setting of a Listed Building/ Cais (au) sy'n effeithio ar leoliad Adeilad Rhestredig

Application No:/ Rhif y cais: 2012/00591/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Proposed re-building of hall formerly known as Frazier Hall at Boys Village for use as single residential dwelling
Location:/Lleoliad: Plot 1, Former Frazier Hall, Boys Village, West Aberthaw
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting The War Memorial, West Aberthaw, Grade II

Application No:/ Rhif y cais: 2012/00592/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Proposed rebuilding of caretakers bungalow to form single dwelling
Location:/Lleoliad: Plot 5, former caretakers bungalow site, Boys Village, West Aberthaw
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting The War Memorial, West Aberthaw, Grade II

Application No:/ Rhif y cais: 2012/00632/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Proposed conversion of canteen block building to form single dwelling
Location:/Lleoliad: Plot 2, Former T Shaped canteen block, Boys Village, West Aberthaw
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting The War Memorial, West Aberthaw, Grade II

Application No:/ Rhif y cais: 2012/00633/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Proposed conversion of school chapel building to form single dwelling
Location:/Lleoliad: Plot 3, Former School Chapel, Boys Village, West Aberthaw
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting The War Memorial, West Aberthaw, Grade II

Application No:/ Rhif y cais: 2012/00634/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Proposed conversion of accommodation block building to form single dwelling
Location:/Lleoliad: Plot 4, former accommodation block flat roof brick building, Boys Village, West Aberthaw
Listed Building:/ Adeilad Rhestredig Affecting The War Memorial, West Aberthaw, Grade II

May affect a Public Right of Way / Gall effeithio ar Hawl Tramwy Cyhoeddus

Application No:/ Rhif y cais: 2012/00676/FUL
Proposal:/Cynnig: Dormer bungalow
Location:/Lleoliad: Tyn Y Tranch Farm, Ystradowen, Cowbridge

Details may be inspected for 21 days at the address given below, or via **www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk**
Gall manylion eu harchwilio am 21 diwrnod yn y cyfeiriad a roddir isod, neu drwy **www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk**

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M. Goldsworthy, Operational Manager Development & Building Control, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Dock Office, Barry. CF63 4RT

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NOLAN'S FINAL DARK KNIGHT MOVIE COMPLETES TRULY CLASSIC TRILOGY

by GARETH JAMIESON

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HAVING taken on what seemed to be a poisoned chalice in the Batman franchise, Chris Nolan has not only resurrected it, but has also redefined the comic book genre on film (it's not for nothing that he is executive-producing next year's Superman film, *Man of Steel*).

Having smashed box-office records with the last Bat-outing, *The Dark Knight*, Nolan's latest entry in the franchise is also likely to be his last.

In *The Dark Knight Rises*, we pick up the story eight years later, with Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) having 'retired' Batman, as Gotham's police, led by Commissioner Gordon (Gary Oldman), have cleaned up the streets.

But when a terrorist named Bane (Tom Hardy) and a cat-thief called Selina Kyle (Anne Hathaway) show up in the city, Wayne must 'rise' once again and defend his city against his most formidable foe yet...

How exactly does a director go about following up a film that grossed over $1billion dollars worldwide and was held up as perhaps the greatest comic-book movie of all time?

For a lesser director, the challenge may have proved too much. However, Chris Nolan must have felt confident in his ability not just to follow up *The Dark Knight*, but to wrap up his take on the franchise.

It was confidence that was not misplaced, as *The Dark Knight Rises* is a grandiose and epic film that brings the *Dark Knight* trilogy to a satisfying conclusion, the film aiming higher than its predecessor and, by and large, hitting those targets.

The law of sequels is that they must be bigger, more dramatic, and have more spectacle than what came before, and given that *The Dark Knight* superseded these rules, quite what Nolan and company would do this time around would be closely watched.

However, there is no getting away from the raising of the dramatic stakes as characters are put through the wringer, in terms of the scope of the direction, which is sweeping, and the set-pieces, which push the bar even higher.

Nolan's direction has grown more accomplished since his first Batman outing, and here he indulges himself fully. Certainly the near-three-hour runtime doesn't come close to dragging; there is so much story to tell that the film moves along nicely.

But Nolan is as keen to concentrate on the drama as he is the action, resulting in a film that bridges the gap between the two elements, and more than delivering on both.

Writing along with his brother Jonathan, the pair delve deeper into the universe they've created, giving nearly all of the main characters their moment in the sun, while taking pains to ensure the story wraps up cleanly.

Come the conclusion, all the protagonists feel fully realised and well drawn out (even if some, such as Marion Cotillard's Miranda Tate feel slightly under done).

Christian Bale delivers an incredible performance as the man with two identities, capturing the pain and guilt that the years have brought upon him, wrestling with his desire to save the city he loves.

Bale's is the driving role through the film and the actor, as ever supported more than dependably by the similarly-impressive Michael Caine as Alfred, is more than up to the task.

Considering he spends the entire film behind a mask, Tom Hardy is impressive as Bane, the actor using his eyes and dominating physical presence to great effect, the physicality emphasising how big a threat he is to both Batman and Gotham.

Anne Hathaway blows away the preconceptions that she wasn't up to the role of Selina Kyle with a breathtaking turn that burns through the film.

Both Joseph Gordon Levitt and Gary Oldman are similarly as impressive, the pair incredible, with the whole cast delivering exquisite performances.

While sad that this is the finale of Nolan's Batman, his rescue of the character on the big screen, and subsequent revival, has resulted in nothing short of one of the finest cinematic trilogies of all time.

The Dark Knight Rises is a worthy, and hugely satisfying, closing chapter.

VERDICT – Saying goodbye to Batman with an epic and emotional outing, The Dark Knight Rises is top-class film making by Christopher Nolan.

With an outstanding cast, and beautiful balance between drama and action, it is a fitting finale to a truly outstanding trilogy – good luck to whoever has to follow this! Essential viewing.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: The Dark Knight (2008), Inception (2010)

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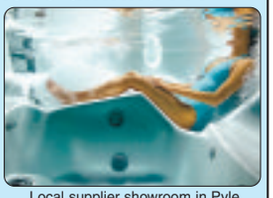
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Brook Cottage, Llancarfan - £485,000
Charming, detached character cottage set in beautiful position overlooking the brook which passes through the well regarded village of Llancarfan. Well presented accommodation briefly comprises entrance vestibule, open plan living/dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, study, sitting room, rear hall/utility room and cloakroom. First floor: a landing area provides wonderful space, 3 double bedrooms one of which has an ensuite and a family bathroom. Landscaped gardens surround the property. Off road parking and a detached double garage.

Chestnut Villa, Llantwit Major - £309,950
A characterful family home in a conservation area within the historic 'West End' of Llantwit Major and with a wonderful, sheltered west facing mature garden. Large lounge with woodburner, dining room and fitted kitchen. Also utility room and ground floor cloakroom. Two bedooms and bathroom to first floor; also third, double bedroom to attic accessed from bathroom. West facing, garden with patio and lawn with 'Discovery' apple tree and surrounded by flower and shrub borders. Stone-built, garden store.

Primrose View, Llanblethian - £575,000
A brand new detached property in the heart of the well regarded village of Llanblethian, a short walk from Cowbridge town centre. Bright and spacious accommodation finished to a high quality comprises of reception hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, utility room and downstairs shower room, 4 bedrooms 2 with en-suites, and a family bathroom. Integral garage. Enclosed gardens.

8 The Limes, Cowbridge - £249,950
A brand new detached property in the heart of the well regarded village of Llanblethian, a short walk from Cowbridge town centre. Bright and spacious accommodation finished to a high quality comprises of reception hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, utility room and downstairs shower room, 4 bedrooms 2 with en-suites, and a family bathroom. Integral garage. Enclosed gardens.

Nash House, Nash, Cowbridge - £645,000
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Rose Cottage, Llandow - £299,950
A picturesque, 4 bedroom character cottage set in the heart of this well regarded village. The accommodation briefly comprises of entrance hall, living room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room. To the first floor, 4 bedrooms and family shower room. Outside, a private, enclosed rear garden. Off street parking. Cowbridge school catchment. No onward chain.

2 Kingscombe Cottage, Llanblethian - £299,950
A period, semi detached cottage situated in a wonderful position, in the centre of Llanblethian. The accommodation briefly comprises of porch, living room, kitchen with pantry, rear hall, bathroom and three bedrooms. Outside store. Large plot with off road parking. Requires some modernisation.

Ty Amandla, Marcross - £240,000
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57 Eastgate, Cowbridge - £245,000
A two bedroom cottage situated in the heart of Cowbridge. Accommodation briefly comprises entrance hall, living room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, landing, two double bedrooms and a bathroom. Enclosed back garden.

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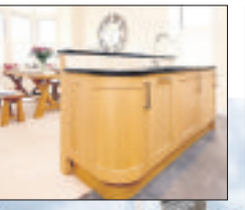

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Record-breaking season for under-9 cricket team

IT has been a fantastic season for the Cowbridge cricket under-9s - and a record breaking one.

Never before has the club had the privilege of coaching nearly 40 children on a consistent basis throughout the season.

In fact, the popularity of the coaching sessions has meant that Wednesday evening Cowbridge mini-tournaments have been the 'must attend' social event of the week for mums and dads proudly watching their sons and daughters display their skills.

Skills is absolutely the right word. Many children who back in February (when indoor nets began) couldn't bowl, bat, catch or throw are now impressing the crowds with the full range of their developing abilities. Trust me when I advise that numerous Glamorgan and even England stars of the future are being developed here.

We have a number of bowlers who now regularly terrorise other clubs' aspiring batsmen, while several Cowbridge batsmen have inflicted bruises on watching adults who believe themselves to be out of harm's way! And that's before we get to the catching. Goodness me they have all come a long way!

Many of this year's squad will still be under 9 next year which means that results in 2013 will be even better. Having said that, this year Cowbridge teams have beaten some top sides from other clubs. The future is extremely exciting.

It has been an enormous pleasure to coach such an enthusiastic, lively and sporting group of young children starting out in learning a game which will hopefully sustain them for years to come. I would also thank, in particular, Mike Reilly for his brilliant coaching support and the numerous mums and dads who have lent a hand when needed.

What a fabulous season! The photo shows a number of players who took part in a tournament at Cowbridge in early July - on a day when the sun shone! Record breaking season indeed!

JW

ABOVE: Some of Cowbridge's keen under-9 cricketers.

Mixed results for Cowbridge bowlers

COWBRIDGE lady bowlers again fell foul of the weather, with their league match, at home to Barry Central, cancelled.

However, their Cowbridge Shield match, at home to Llantwit Major, was played and they had a good win by 50 shots to 37.

On captain Pat Holdsworth's rink of Lynda Wilson, Sylvia Hole and Judy Springett, they won well, 19-9.

The rink of Dorothy Pritchard, Barbara Slade, Anne Jarvis and skip Shirley Wilkinson also had a good win by 20-13.

On Joy Woolford's rink of Diane Purnell, Karen Every-Clayton and Sue Flower, they lost 11-15.

On Thursday, the ladies played a friendly match at Penarth, in beautiful sunshine at last, losing the match 35-55, with only the rink of Shirley Wilkinson, Phyllis Price, Carol Davies and Jan Lewis doing well with a well-earned draw of 13-13.

The other two rinks both lost 11-21. Members of the two losing rinks were Diane Purnell, Mary Dowdle, Pat Holdsworth and skip Joan Bradley, and on the other rink, Lynda Wilson, Diane Lloyd, Kay Edwards and skip Pat Davey.

The men played Barry Athletic at home in the Munro Cup and had a close game, winning on two rinks but also losing on two.

Steve Dickens' rink of Terry Dunsworth, Rob Lewis and Guy Morton won 26-15, and the rink of Ron Frayling, Gerry Lloyd, Alan Wallace and skip Dennis Snelling also won well, 18-8.

However, on the rinks of Brian Kent and Byron Richards, both lost by one shot. Clive Pritchard, Len Taylor, Colin Wilkinson and Brian Kent lost 13-14, and Eric Sewell, Brian Williams, John Trott and Byron Richards went down 16-17, losing on the last end.

In the league match away at Senghenydd, the men had a heavy loss by 66 shots to 108. They did manage to pick up two points with a good win on skip Byron Richards' rink by 23-22.

Byron was helped in his win by Clive Pritchard, Ron Wooford and John Trott.

Other rink scores were: Terry Dunsworth, Norman Wilkinson, Guy Morton and skip Steve Dickens lost 12-28; Ron Frayling, Brian Williams, Colin Wilson and skip Mike Bradley lost 19-33; and captain Dennis Snelling's rink of Mansel Davey, Gerwyn Watkins and John Jones, lost 12-25.

The good thing about this match was that it was played in glorious sunshine.

NJW

Local gymnasts bring medal collection back from USA!

EIGHT Barry YMCA gymnasts and three coaches recently arrived home tired but happy after winning 11 medals and having a fantastic experience when they competed at the San Dollar Invitational event at the World of Sport in Florida.

In the Prep Optional Senior and Level 7 events, medals were awarded to the top six gymnasts. Tia Ali gained an all-round medal placing of sixth, and added to this with a third on beam and fifth on bars.

Ellice Stockford climbed onto the podium on two occasions, placing fifth on bars and floor. Chelsea Slack also claimed two medals, placing fourth on bars and sixth on vault.

Ellie Peterson continued the medal run, placing second on beam and joint fifth on floor, with her teammate Ellice. Seren Mirza Davies added to the medal tally, placing sixth on beam.

Elisha Watkins was the sole Barry representative in Prep Optional Junior event where the top three gymnasts were awarded medals. Elisha performed a number of new skills to place fourth overall.

In the higher Level 7 Junior B event, the top six gymnasts were awarded medals. Barry YMCA was represented by Alana Stokes and Nia Davies in this category who both successfully performed a number of new skills.

Alana claimed a sixth place medal on bars, and placed eighth overall. Nia placed seventh on floor and ninth overall.

A great experience was had by both gymnasts and coaches. A huge thanks is given to everybody who helped with the fundraising for this trip.

Special thanks go to Barry Town Council, Dinas Powys Town Council and Kelleway Builders.

Barry YMCA Gymnastics Club has organised a summer programme which includes taster sessions in a variety of disciplines.

To find out more about the summer programme or find out about more about the gymnastics opportunities available all year round at Barry YMCA, call 01446 724001.

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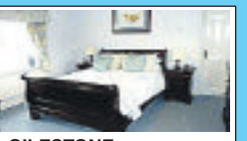

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Mrs Pat Maynard

would like to thank all her friends for the kind messages of sympathy that she and her family have received after the tragic loss of Tom. They are much appreciated.

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29

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29

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1.8 Ghia

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29

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Ford Fiesta
Zetec 1250cc

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29

EDWARDS
Michael John

Passed away peacefully at home on July 20 after a long illness, beloved husband of Joyce and much loved father, grandpa, brother and friend.

Funeral service to be held at Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge on Monday, July 30 at 2.45pm, followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium Bridgend.

Family flowers only, but donations in lieu would be much appreciated for Marie Curie and Velindre Hospital - donations may be sent to Velindre Hospital, Velindre Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff; enquiries telephone 01446 775681.

EVANS
John Dewi
(David)

Daphne, Paul, Chris, Sian and family wish to thank friends and neighbours for all their kindness, lovely flowers and cards following our sad loss. Very special thanks to the doctors and nurses at Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend for their wonderful care and compassion for David. Grateful thanks to Reverend David Juliff and W James & Sons, Fonmon for their kindess and the beautiful service.
Our thanks to you all.

NICHOLAS
Ivor Glyn

(4th April 1950 - 15th July 2012)

Peacefully on July 15, 2012 at Morriston Hospital, Swansea, aged 62 years, Ivor (master butcher of both Cardiff and Cowbridge), dearly beloved husband of Edwina, adored father of Jayne and James, and cherished grandad of Jadon. Ivor was loved and respected by so many and will be deeply missed.

Resting at Thomas Brothers Funeral Home, Cowbridge until funeral on Monday July 30. Service to be held at Coychurch Crematorium at 12 noon.

Flowers may be sent to Thomas Brothers Funeral Home, or donations to be made to Coronary Care Unit at Morriston Hospital, Swansea, West Glamorgan SA6 6NL.

THOMAS
Linda Joyce

It is with great sadness the family announce the passing of their beloved sister Linda, loving daughter of the late Mansel and Sybil Thomas of Llanblethian. She will be missed by all family and friends.

Funeral service at Coychurch Crematorium, Friday, July 27 at 12 noon. Family flowers only. Donations in lieu may be sent to Marie Curie,Velindre Hospital, Velindre Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff.

CODY
June (RIP)

Suddenly on July 17, 2012 at her home in Llantwit Major, the beloved daughter of the late William Francis and Gwenllian Cody, a dear sister to her brothers and sisters. Greatly missed by all who knew her.

Requiem Mass to be held at Our Lady & St Illtyd Roman Catholic Church, Ham Lane, Llantwit Major on Wednesday, August 1, 2012 at 1.15pm. Afterwards to Cathays Cemetery (Fairoaks Road Entrance).

Donations if wished to S.V.P. c/o the church.

All enquiries to W A Brown & Son, Llantwit Major, telephone 01446 792489.

Birthday Memories of
Thomas K Farman

July 31, 1925

All my life I will miss you,
As the years come and go,
But in my heart you will live forever,
Because I loved you so.

Your dearly loved wife, Gwyneth.

Thank You

Deb's 60th

Thank you so much to my wonderful family and good friends for my beautiful cards and presents, especially Gus, Rhys, Lisa, Judy, Lal, Alun, 'Bertie the Bhaji' and Freeway who worked so hard to make sure my party was a success.

I HAD A BALL!

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of Wick

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Love, Nan. XXX

Birthdays

Happy Birthday

CLEMENT

26 July 2012

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The family-friendly Honda has a touch of excitement

MOTORING with TIM SAUNDERS

THERE are a great many off-roaders on the market and if you are looking to purchase one it is important to understand what you want.

For instance, are you looking for an estate that is also a 4x4? If so, you might consider the Subaru Forester. Or do you prefer a more robust and high up vehicle? The Mitsubishi L200 perhaps?

You might be a Land Rover or Range Rover stalwart, in which case nothing else will do although you might wish to take a look at Jeep's offerings.

You can't forget about Sports Activity Vehicles that will handle light off-roading like the BMW X5 or the Mercedes M-Class.

Have we finished? No. Because there is another type of 4x4, manufactured by Honda. Its CR-V sports utility vehicle (SUV) doesn't even have permanent four-wheel drive. Normally it drives just the front wheels. Four wheel drive only kicks in when the system detects the front wheels slipping.

It's quite clever really because the driver doesn't need to worry about changing from two to four wheels as they would in the Mitsubishi L200, for instance and in theory this makes it more economical when commuting.

The CR-V ES-T 2-litre manual tested follows the design of traditional off-roaders being relatively high off the ground and feels as if it will take all that's thrown at it.

I used to moan about modern vehicles not having any character and manufacturers preferring plastic over chrome. In the past few weeks, I have had the pleasure of driving an Audi A1 hatchback, where there was a fair bit of the shiny metal and now the Honda CR-V, which also liberally uses the precious (to me) material.

It really is encouraging, as I believe it does add to the overall charm. The chrome door handles shimmer in the sunlight (when it appears) and make a good contrast to the black finish of the test vehicle.

THE HONDA CR-V

A quirky feature is the handbrake, which is shaped more like a lever that you might expect in a racing car simulator. This is a little low to the floor, requiring me to lean to the left when engaging it.

The interior is comfortable – there is air conditioning and heated front seats. On a hot day though, the leather can be sticky and cooled seats would be advantageous.

Its six-speed manual box is precise while the engine powers the vehicle from 0 to 60mph in under 10 seconds and on to a top speed of 118mph.

Parkers, the car experts, says: *"The CR-V) takes up no more road space than a family saloon (it's shorter than the Honda Accord) and its front end has been designed to cause minimum damage to pedestrians in an accident.*

"This model is also less thirsty, less polluting, more practical and better to drive than its predecessor."

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Golfer Gary savours victory at Maesteg

THE Blacksmiths Golf Society chose the picturesque Maesteg golf club for their annual prestigious competition, 'The Blacksmiths Closed'.

Three times winner John Campbell, who comes alive when the famous old toilet seat trophy is mentioned, set the early pace, but couldn't keep it up, although he did take home the nearest the pin award.

Evergreen Bill Aspinall took longest drive and also third place in the stableford competition.

Wick's Philemon Williams was given his 'bandit of the year' trophy and promptly lit up the course to finish runner-up to popular winner Gary Nealon, who was being rewarded for his consistency.

He now receives a two shot handicap cut (three if new hips arrive before the next fixture!) CG

Gary Nealon (right) receives the old loo seat trophy from 2011 champion Steve Jenkins.

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FIRST TEAM SNATCH VICTORY FROM THE JAWS OF DEFEAT

COWBRIDGE First XI pulled off a remarkable victory on Saturday, just as they were staring at a very heavy defeat for the first time this season.

Having won the toss, the Briton Ferry skipper had no hesitation in putting Cowbridge in to bat. After the recent appalling weather, an unpredictable wicket and a slow outfield were not the only problems the Cowbridge batsmen had to face.

This was certainly a very good toss to have won. The visiting bowling attack made full use of the conditions to such an extent that the home side could only manage 144 runs, and were bowled out in 48 overs.

To illustrate the difficulties the batsmen faced on an unpredictable wicket against an accurate attack, after 25 overs only 63 runs were scored for the loss of 3 wickets.

Eventually, they managed another 81 runs in the remaining overs. Sam Wood (24), Amin Ramly, (21) Chris Willey (24) and Ryan Taylor (22 not out) were the main scorers.

It was a total that all felt would not be enough for a win as the wicket was getting easier as time passed.

The Briton Ferry innings got off to a rapid start with 52 runs scored off the first 10 overs, and it looked as if the match would finish quickly.

After 25 overs, the score was 91 for 3. The opening batsman, Paul Evans, was 48 not out and with seven wickets in hand, victory for the visitors was a distinct probability.

Inexplicably, at that moment Evans chipped Ryan Taylor to mid on. The catch was taken by Mike Lloyd and from the promising position of 103 for 3 they collapsed to be all out for 110!

In just eight overs, an unbelievable change of fortune had taken place and the home side was ecstatic.

Ryan Taylor bowled his usual 15 overs and took 4-45, just reward for a patient effort. Tom Warner's opening spell of five overs brought no reward at all, but in his second spell of 4.1 overs he was far more destructive, taking four wickets for two runs.

Ryan with 4-45 and Tom 4-18 take the headlines, but this was a team effort. Tom Merilaht's captaincy, Sam Wood's impeccable wicket keeping, Chris Willey's careful batting, Mike Lloyd's two catches, Amin Ramly's explosive hitting and last, but not least, Faris Rosmanizam's stunning throw from deep mid-on to effect a timely run out, all contributed to the victory.

This week the First XI takes the trek to Llandysul hopeful of a similar result, but not a similar method of achieving it; the Second XI is at home.

DL

COWBRIDGE SECONDS TOO STRONG FOR THIRD PLACED

BRITON FERRY With the sun shining Cowbridge Second XI made the short journey down the M4 to Briton Ferry for a very important game against third-placed Briton Ferry Steel.

Cowbridge knew that Briton Ferry are a strong side and were therefore conscious that they would have to perform well in all departments if they were to secure a further victory; and thankfully the side did not disappoint.

Upon arrival, the captain lost the toss and was asked to bat first. Regular readers will no doubt be aware that the Cowbridge captain is far from keen on batting first, but in this case the decision was out of his hands and the Cowbridge openers strapped on the pads to begin the Cowbridge innings.

The innings started brightly with Richard Finnucane and Jonty Webb pushing the score along until Richard was bowled by a good delivery with the score on 25.

This brought Chris Brace to the crease and the pair continued the good rate of scoring, finding the boundary and running well between the wicket. With the score on 55, the captain was adjudged lbw, which brought the big hitting Naveed Younis to the crease, and he proceeded to pepper the boundary to keep the run rate ticking along.

Unfortunately, both Chris and Naveed went in quick succession, with Cowbridge mindful of the need to build a big partnership to guarantee a competitive total on a postage stamp sized ground with a fast outfield.

This was indeed what happened with an excellent partnership between the talented youngster Harri Collier and seasoned pro Ian Evans. With the score at 60 for 4 off 24 overs the pair took the total past 110 with some excellent shot selection and running between the wicket.

The pair punished the bad deliveries and made the Briton Ferry bowlers toil in the midday sun. Harri was eventually out for a well made 21, with the score at 116, which brought Sean Rowland to the crease.

Sean continued where Harri left off unfurling an array of shots as he dispatched the Briton Ferry bowlers to all parts. Ably supported by Ian Evans, Sean raced to a quick fire 47 before he was caught agonisingly close to his first senior half century; he needn't worry as on this performance his first 50 is just round the corner. Sean's efforts, along with Ian's (33), meant the score had risen to over 180 with 200, and maximum batting points, well in sight. Cowbridge were able to reach this with some further big hitting from Umar Rafique, with Cowbridge finishing on 202.

This was an excellent total but Cowbridge knew they would have to bowl well to stand any chance of victory. And bowl well they did, as John Gilbert and A Qasim immediately caused problems for the Briton Ferry batsmen. Briton Ferry were soon two down with the score only 14.

With Qasim's extra pace and John Gilbert's variation and guile, the Briton Ferry batsmen found the going incredibly tough. Things got even harder for Briton Ferry with the introduction of Harri Collier who bowled very well, aided by some good fielding. Wickets continued to tumble with only the Briton Ferry captain showing any resistance.

In the end, the Briton Ferry captain was caught in the deep to a terrific catch by Richard Finnucane, meaning that Briton Ferry were all out for 84, with John Gilbert finishing with 3 for 30, A Qasim 2 for 18, Harri Collier 1 for 26 and Matthew Keating 3 for 4 off only ywo overs.

This was an incredibly satisfying victory for Cowbridge as they had completely outplayed the third-placed side in the league and consolidated their position on top of the table. It was very pleasing to see the side perform with the both the bat and ball and, hopefully, this can continue for the rest of the season.

JW

Dry weather brings in drivers

LLANDOW Kart Club's main championship campaign moved into its second half as the summer broke with tradition and graced the South Wales club with a largely dry raceday, as the visiting ABkC Super 4 Championships for 125 ICC UK swelled the entry to 90.

The popular Bambino class got things underway with five drivers all aiming to produce their best in the decent conditions. Regulars Shayne Clarke, Jakob Chamberlain and Matthew Rees all achieved the gold awards, with Brooklyn Thomas attaining silver. Meanwhile, although the newest member of the class, Jenson Parton, didn't manage an award on this occasion, he did knock ten seconds off his previous lap time, so remains headed in the right direction.

With 26 drivers on show, the two Cadet classes received their own finals after running together in the heats. Comer honours eventually went the way of the visiting Charlie Andrews, although brother Harry ran him close throughout the day, winning heat three before accepting runners-up spot in the final. Tom Rawlings completed the podium as five seconds covered the leading quintet at the flag.

The numerically bigger Honda Cadet class saw reigning Welsh champion Hugo Holmes and Joshua Martin take the victories in the early stages, and it was the former who came out on top in the main event too, albeit crossing the line just 0.15secs clear of second-placed Ethan Ling. Ross Thomas rounded out the top three, ahead of Alex Rees and Martin.

Honda Junior could not match either Cadet field for numbers, but that didn't bother Ben Stevens, who continued his seemingly inexorable march towards the title with another clean sweep of heats and final. Thomas Croydon and Tom Ford led the resistance, but had to settle for swapping second and third places before Croydon secured the runner-up spot some seven seconds adrift of Stevens in the main event. Novice Patrick Hill also turned out in the four-strong class.

Despite the presence of perennial frontrunner Ross Chell, Ryan Edwards was the driver to beat in Junior TKM, claiming two heats and going on to notch up another notable victory in the final. Chell took the middle heat, but missed the podium in the main event, allowing Louis Griffith-Walker and driver of the day Yousuf Ashraf to complete the top three.

With a combined eight runners, Junior and Mini Max shared their track time throughout the day. While Jodie Handford had the upper hand on Minimax novice Ceran Sokhi each time, the Junior class was a lot more open. Toby Allen, visitor Toby Cook and Rob Ellis each took a win during the heats, before Ellis doubled up with victory in the final, coming home seven seconds clear of the field. His passage was aided by Allen retiring on the opening lap, leaving Cook and Thomas Stride to complete the podium.

If Junior Max provided some variety, there was little on show at the front of the Senior Honda class, where Simon Evans continued his relentless march towards a third title with four wins from four outings. Behind him, Nick Turley, Danny Griffiths and Paul Saunders took it in turns to lead the pursuit, with Turley eventually coming home second in the main event. The third podium spot remained open, meanwhile, and eventually fell to Ferdinand Ball, who bounced back from exclusion in heat three to cross the line a matter of hundredths behind Turley, with Gareth Lewis denying Griffiths in fourth.

Josh Collings returned from national championship duty to restate his superiority in Senior Max, winning all three heats and adding the final for good measure, as those who enjoyed his recent absence were left to battle over the minor podium places. While Collings had things all his own way out front, Matthew Dowers led the chase, twice finishing second in the heats before repeating the result in the main event. David Entwistle underlined his recent good form with a runner-up spot of his own, but it was out-of-towner Jon Sweeper who ultimately claimed third place in the final, with Sebastian Hutchinson and Dilip Singh also getting the better of Entwistle.

The Max 177 class grew to four runners, but that could not prevent Nigel Hughes from claiming three of the four races, including the final, with reigning champion Wayne Stone taking the other. Simon Wheeler and novice Nicky Coombs were the others in action.

The ICC UK runners provided a rarely-seen spectacle as the month's guest championship, with 14 runners scrapping over the spoils. James Mudd laid down an early marker with victory in heat one, before Tom Duggan threw his hat firmly into the ring with wins in the next two. Neither would ultimately come out on top in the fourth and final encounter, however, as Matt Dittman emerged from the shadows to take the honours by just 0.03secs over Duggan, while No.1 plate Daniel Borton claimed the remaining step on the podium.

RESULTS:

BAMBINO Gold Award, Silver Award, Jakob Chamberlain (Birel), Brooklyn Thomas (Birel), Shayne Clarke (Topkart), Rees; Participation, Jenson Parton.

CADET COMER 1. Charlie Andrews; 2. Harry Andrews; 3. Tom Rawlings (Zip).

CADET HONDA 1. Hugo Holmes (Zip); 2. Ethan Ling (Project One); 3. Ross Thomas (Wright).

JUNIOR HONDA 1. Ben Stevens (7Kart); 2. Thomas Croydon (Jade); 3. Tom Ford (Biz).

JUNIOR TKM 1. Ryan Edwards (TalKo); 2. Louis Griffith-Walker (Jade); 3. Yousuf Ashraf (Jade).

MINI MAX 1. Jodie Handford (Tonykart); 2. Ceran Sokhi (Kosmic).

JUNIOR ROTAX 1. Rob Ellis (Tonykart); 2. Toby Cook (Formula K); 3. Thomas Stride (CRG).

SENIOR HONDA 1. Simon Evans (7Kart); 2. Nick Turley; 3. Ferdinand Ball (MS).

SENIOR ROTAX 1. Josh Collings (CRG); 2. Matthew Dowers (Kosmic); 3. Jon Sweeper (Tonykart).

ROTAX 177 1. Nigel Hughes; 2. Wayne Stone (Tonykart); 3. Simon Wheeler (CRG).

ABkC SUPER 4 CHAMPIONSHIPS 125 ICC UK 1. Matt Dittman (Tonykart); 2. Tom Duggan (Energy); 3. Daniel Borton (BRM).

Best Novice: Joshua Budding (Honda Cadet); Driver of the Day: Yousuf Ashraf (Junior TKM).

CRAIG LLEWELLYN